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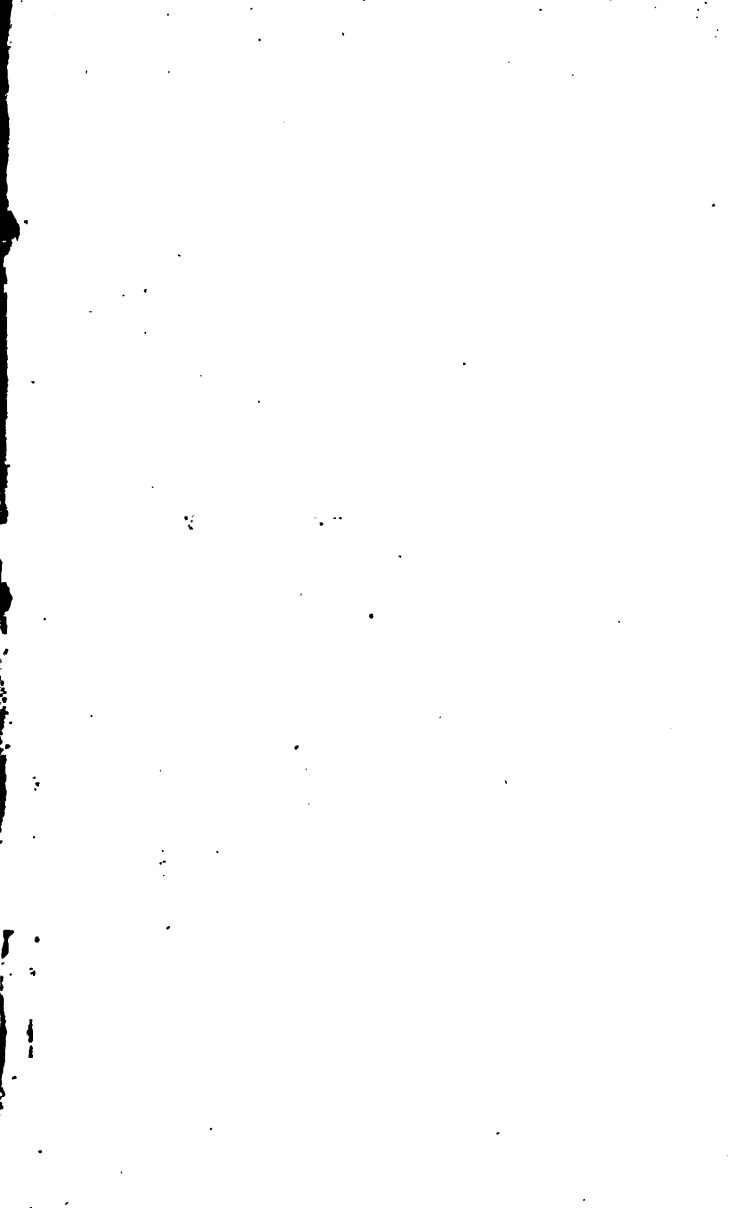
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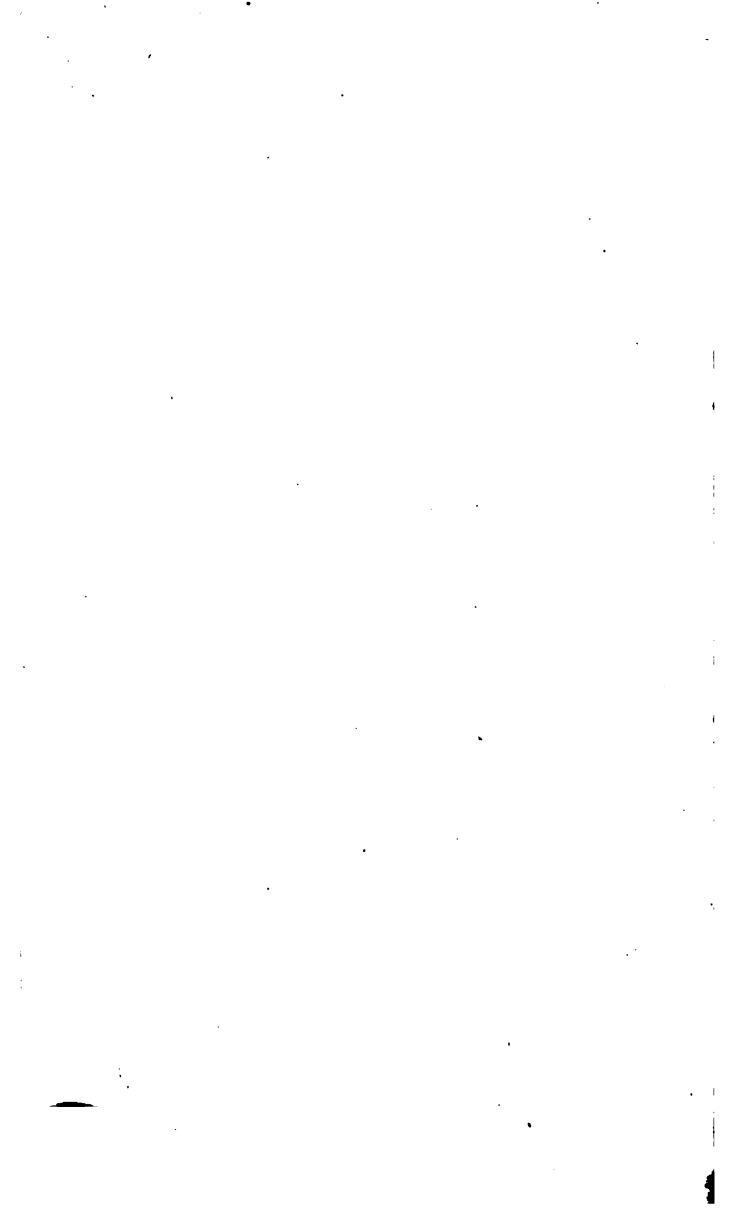
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G. J. Halton

THE
PARIS SPECTATOR;
OR,
L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSEE-D'ANTIN.

CONTAINING

Observations

UPON

PARISIAN MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Translated from the French.

By W. JERDAN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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VOL. II.
—

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

THE observations which I place at the head of the Second Volume of my Collection, are not intended to thank the Public for the favourable reception of the first. The writer of a book which pleases, and the reader who purchases a book which amuses, are upon equal terms; but in announcing to the Public the success of his Work, the Author, who has to account for it, is often more embarrassed to justify the decision than to congratulate himself upon it: this is my situation. Endeavouring to exhibit pictures of human manners, in a

dramatic frame, proper to display their various tints, I had equally to fear my likenesses being so general as to resemble no one, or so particular as to be ascribed to individuals. In the first case, I should be uninteresting ; in the second applications, would be made where I intended none. I have not been fortunate enough to avoid the latter rock, and (however suspicious such a declaration may appear from the mouth of an Author) I have no hesitation in saying, I have struck upon the rock which I most feared. Some persons constantly occupied in searching for the originals of my Characters, and Models for my Pictures, endeavour to give me a name for scandal and malignity, at which price the highest literary eminence would appear to me

too dearly purchased. The fear alone of such an insinuation would ere now have compelled me to renounce my labours, had I not possessed vanity enough to think myself sufficiently guarded against an accusation of this nature by the opinion of my friends, by my Work itself, and I dare affirm by my own character. In this Sketch of our Manners, (I here renew the declaration) I study to depict society in the mass, and not this or that company. To seize general ideas, and not particular traits: I concern myself with classes and with species, never with individuals. The observations which I make are the result of analysis. Personalities belong only to satire, and I have not to reproach myself, in a single instance, with such dishonour to my pen.

The end which I have proposed, much more than the talents which I employ in carrying it into effect, has given rise to a most dangerous comparison between the SPECTATOR and the Hermit of the Chaussée-d'Antin. Some watchful critics (whose wit and imagination it does not just now suit me to applaud) have endeavoured to establish a sort of parallel between the two Works, by which I am indeed greatly honoured ; but one of these Gentlemen has thrown into the balance in favour of the English observer, the gravity of the matters which are sometimes the subjects of his Essays, and the tinge of frivolity which the Hermit generally spreads over his own. In the first place, I have endeavoured to answer this reproach in the present Volume, by allotting less space than in

the former, to the vanities of fashion, or the daily caprices of opinion ; but I will add, that Addison, Steele, and their coadjutors in the *English Spectator*, lived at a time, and in a country, where questions of the most sublime morality, of the highest literature, and of the most profound erudition, so much interested all classes of society, that in London ten thousand copies of a number of the *Spectator*, treating on the Nature of God, the Immortality of the Soul, or the Superiority of Milton over all other Epic Poets, ancient and modern, were sold in one day. It must be allowed, that the present times are not exactly suited for this species of polemics. One may now be pardoned for being useful, but solely on condition of being agreeable.

Since I am in some sort authorized

to mention the Hermit, after the Spectator, let me be permitted to observe, that I have imposed on myself the task of oftener varying the *frame* of my articles ; at least two-thirds of the English Work is under the shape of Correspondence, of which I only make use, when I have to treat on frivolous subjects, or advance observations of little importance, and which are not susceptible of enlargement.

The first Edition of the former Volume of this collection was speedily exhausted. This success, while it decided me to a continuation of the Observations of the Hermit de la Chaussée-d'Antin, has imposed on me new obligations. The Reader will appretiate the efforts which I have made to fulfil them.

THE
PARIS SPECTATOR;

or,

L'HERMITE DE LA CHAUSSÉE-D-ANTIN.

No. I.—3d Oct. 1812.

THE SENTIMENTAL WORLD.

(LE GENRE SENTIMENTAL.)

Ille dolet vere, qui sine teste dolet.

MARTIAL.

.... Le vrai deuil, sais-tu bien qui le porte?
C'est certuy-la qui sans témoins se deult.

Imit. de MAROT.

**Would'st know when unfeign'd tears are shed?
'Tis when unseen we weep the dead.**

Parlerai-je d'Iris? Chacun la prône et l'aime;
C'est un cœur, mais un cœur c'est l'humanité
même;

Si d'un pied étourdi, quelque jeune éventé,
Frappe en courant son chien, qui jappe épou-
vanté,

La voilà qui se meurt de tendresse et d'alarmes.
Un papillon souffrant lui fait verser des larmes.

GILBERT.

I THINK with Juvenal that "nature in be-
stowing [tears, meant us to possess sen-

2 THE SENTIMENTAL WORLD.

sibility, and I also agree with him, that sensibility is one of her most precious gifts :”* but, it is indeed a gift. We are endowed with it at our birth ; it developes itself with us and in spite of us, in forms and shapes as different as the human figure ; it is a disposition of the soul, which has only lately become a study. I have seen the basis of this sentimental school laid in France ; for half a century I have been acquainted with its principal professors, and have watched its progress from melancholy to vapours, to nervous fever, and to convulsions, inclusively.—Sensibility (I dare not use the word *sensiblerie* with which our language has lately been enriched) has given for some time past, and still confers character in the

* Mollissima corda.

Humano generi dare se natura facetur.

Quæ lacrymas dedit : hæc nostri pars optima
sensus.

Juvenal Sat. 20.

world; many people owe their success to it, after attaining which, they sink into ridicule; for, as Duclos says, affectation is always detected in the end, and then we even fall below the standard of our real value.

One would hardly think in what place, and in the view of what objects, I have made these reflexions: in my *hermitage in the Chaussée d'Antin*, they would appear natural; but in the *hermitage of Jean Jacques Rousseau*, in this charming retreat of the author of *Emilius*, which the author of *Silvain* now inhabits, when I had before my eyes the little ebony table on which so many pages of the sublimest eloquence have been written, pages in which the finest traits of sensibility are apparent; when all the objects with which I was surrounded recalled to my mind the idea of a writer whose works will ever be the delight of every feeling soul; does it not seem something like profanation to seek the subject of a satire against sensibility in

such a spot? I own I should have but a bad opinion of any one who could visit the habitation of this great man with indifference; who could coldly walk through the little garden in which Jean Jacques meditated on the chapters of Emilius; who could repose himself under the ancient chesnut trees, where he reclined, on returning from his excursions in the forest of Montmorency; but can my respect for the author of some beautiful productions prevent me from laughing at such a ridiculous sight as that of a lady who comes every year on a certain day to this celebrated hermitage, to roll herself on the ground in convulsive spasms, like certain devotees on the tomb of Deacon Paris? Can it prevent me from thinking there is some exaggeration in those tears which are shed by a young mother and her daughter, in the room of a man who sent his children to the hospital? Can it prevent me from smiling at that crowd of pilgrims, who go there only to scrawl their names

on the garden walls, and even on the bust of the hero himself, whose right cheek is entirely covered with the celebrated name of *M. Thotè*.

I have the misfortune, for perhaps it may be one, never to be the dupe of these sentimental juggles, of these *cold* emotions, of these solemn griefs which our actors, and particularly our actors in society, are continually practising. I have more than once baffled the chiefs of this sect; shall I not, then be on my guard against their imitators? What I am now writing, I said the other day to a young man who accompanied me in a walk, and whose mind was, I feared, a little tinctured with this affectation.—As we left home I pointed out to him, a few yards from the hermitage, a small house where a young married couple, celebrated in the arts, had shut themselves up some years ago to withdraw entirely from the tumult of the world, and to live only for each other.—“What happiness must they enjoy,” ex-

claimed my young companion, "and how much do I envy their felicity." "Let us enter, Sir, and see this charming retreat, the abode of youth, innocence, and love."—I calmed his enthusiasm by informing him that three months after this voluntary seclusion, the husband and wife returned to Paris, each seeking a divorce. "What inference would you draw from this?" rejoined he, a little out of humour, "That we should mistrust a sentiment which displays itself with so much ostentation; that false sensibility is a cloak to cover many other defects; and that real feeling is not always exempt from vanity, and is even sometimes allied to a species of inhumanity."—"I do not comprehend the latter trait," said he, "and should be glad to hear how such a paradox can be maintained." "By examples, which you will not dispute," cried I, laughing, "for I shall take them from among your own acquaintance. I have seen you sometimes at Madame Vernon's; she holds a distinguished rank

amongst our painters, and confesses herself that she owes the principal part of her fame to her excessive sensibility. Every body knows the closeness of the friendship which existed between her and M. Maurice, one of our greatest artists.—He fell dangerously ill at a time when Madame Vernon was employed on her picture of the *Communion of St. Jerome*. She did not, for a moment, quit her friend's bedside, lavished upon him the most tender cares, in which she would suffer no one to participate, even when his disorder assumed a fatal appearance. Her picture remained on the easel for want of a model to finish the Head of St. Jerome, which she wished should rival the finest composition of Dominichino. On a sudden the lady was struck with the spectacle before her eyes; the despair of friendship, in a moment, gave way to enthusiasm for the arts; she seized her pencil, with a steady hand, traced her faithful copy of the features of her dying friend, and finished that portrait,

which is the finest of her works. It is said that M. Maurice, who, contrary to all expectation, recovered from his fit of illness, was not very highly gratified with this mark of attachment.

“ I have often heard you boast of M. de Valmont and his wife, as models of every conjugal virtue; you have even, I believe, composed some verses on them, wherein you alternately compare them to Philemon and Baucis, and Pætus and Aria.” “ And I have highly honoured both those pairs,” replied the young man with some warmth. “ Will you deny that they adore each other, and that under the snows of age, they have preserved the sensibility and love for each other, which adorned their youth.” “ You speak more truly than you imagine,” answered I, “ but I deny nothing; I relate facts, and leave you to decide upon them. Convinced of the sentimental axiom, that in every connexion where souls are closely linked, the object of the greatest pity is the one which has the misfortune to survive

what it loves, each of these, as you shall see, is placed by anticipation in this dreadful condition. I was some little time ago in the country with M. and Madame Valmont at Madame Desmaison's, their relation. One morning I met M. de Valmont in the park at an early hour, and continuing our walk, we arrived at a little bower of sycamores and acacias of a very romantic appearance. We seated ourselves on two broken pillars, and there M. de Valmont, with a voice almost inarticulate from tears, made me acquainted with a project he had formed of erecting on this spot the tomb of his wife. 'She loves this place,' said he, 'it is the part to which she generally directs our walks, and more than once I have surprised her here with her handkerchief to her eyes; her health decays; I guess the thoughts which occupy her mind, and her wish shall be gratified. During all the season I have employed myself, unknown to her, in arranging this little bower, agreeably to the melancholy office it is des-

tinged to perform. The idea alone has already cost me many tears.' I was quite astonished with the singularity of such a confidence, and I knew not what reply to make to this a communication, when the bell ringing for breakfast, relieved me from my embarrassment.

"We returned hastily to the house; the repast was despatched with gaiety; Madame de Valmont was in high spirits, and rising from table, she took my arm for a walk, while her husband remained behind to read the newspapers. As we discoursed, either accidentally or on purpose, she led me to the very spot which I had just quitted: at the sight of the little bower, seized with a convulsive trembling, she appeared ready to faint.

"I wished to have conducted her from this gloomy place, but she entered it in spite of my endeavours, and seated herself on the same pedestal which her husband had occupied an hour before. After having smelt to some salts, with which she is

always furnished, ‘ You must not be surprised,’ said she, sobbing, ‘ at the sudden illness which has seized me; I fall into this condition every time I draw near this little grove, and yet I cannot prevail on myself to stay away from it.’ (I expected now to hear her talk of her approaching dissolution.) ‘ The poor soul sinks apace,’ (continued Madame de V.) ‘ he often comes to meditate in this solitary scene, and we never visit it together, but he embraces me in a manner which reaches my heart. There it is that I have chosen his last asylum; the place which I have fixed on for his monument is pointed out by this weeping willow, which I planted with my own hands, and which is often watered with my tears.’ (My young companion at this burst into a fit of laughter.) “ I had much trouble to prevent myself from doing the same thing,” continued I, “ and I asked myself the question which now I put to you—of what nature is the sensibility of this tender couple, who occupy themselves

while alive with fancying the duties they will perform to each other when they die; and who have the courage to familiarize themselves beforehand with the cruel idea of an eternal separation?

“But as I am in a gossiping humour (old men are not easily stopped) I will relate to you another anecdote of the same species, and for the truth of which the whole town of Montpellier can vouch.

“Dr. Lestrat, one of the most skilful physicians of that place, was betrayed into more follies to obtain the hand of Mademoiselle Emily de Vigneul, than any romantic lover of the first novellist of the day. An inward malady, which snatched Madame Lestrat away two years after their marriage, plunged her husband into the most dreadful despair. Nothing could induce him to submit to a final separation; and to save from the tomb the adored remains of his beloved Emily, he confided her corpse to a skilful artist, who was supposed to possess the Egyptian secret of embalming bodies. His success even sur-

passed his hopes; he saw his wife again; it was herself, her features, her attitude; even her complexion preserved the brilliancy and freshness of life.

“ This precious mummy, clothed with an elegant simplicity, was placed as in a sleep on a couch of black velvet, in the cabinet of M. Lestrat; a curtain of sky-blue taffeta concealed her from all prophane eyes, and every day her inconsolable husband paid her a visit, to indulge in his regrets and anguish. During two years, the same affliction, the same attention. At the end of that term, it was observed that the Doctor’s visits became less punctual to his wife; and more frequent to Madame Dorsange. By degrees the cabinet was deserted, and the door closed. Six months elapsed, and no one had entered the *sentimental* closet, when M. Lestrat celebrated his second marriage. His new wife, however, who was not ignorant to what a pitch her husband carried his sensibility, insisted on the *reptalitation* of her embalmed rival. The Doctor

paid his respects to the Vigneul family, begging them to take back their relation. The Vigneuls, piqued at the new marriage, rejected the proposition. During these negotiations, poor Emily was banished to an old box at the bottom of the wardrobe, where the living mistress of the house would not suffer her to remain. The Vigneuls continued obstinate in their refusal, and it became necessary to have recourse to the curate of the parish ; but he, on learning they wished him to bury a woman four years after her death, refused her the sepulchral rites. In this unfortunate embarrassment the poor Doctor, not knowing to whom to apply, determined to inter the body without any further noise, in a retired corner of his garden ; and there are now no vestiges of a woman formerly so much deplored, but six feet of earth, where the grass will no longer grow, on account of the strong smell of camphor and aromatics which still exhale from the Egyptian preparations.

"I do not assert," (added I, on finishing my recital) "like the Stoics, that sensibility is an evil, much less a vice, but I wish you to learn from this conversation the following axiom, that true sensibility is a sentiment full of modesty, to which concealment is more necessary than even to love itself."

No. II.—31st OCTOBER, 1812.

THE CATACOMBS.

Dans ces lieux souterrains, dans ces sombres
abîmes,

La mort confusément, entasse ses victimes.

LEGOUVÉ, Poëme des Sépultures.

Gli uoani hanno in orrore la morte, io no.

TASSO.

In these dark vaults, in wild confusion laid,
Death's victims rest—the Temple of the dead.

I HAVE often heard the painter Robert recount, and always with increased interest, his adventure in the Catacombs of Rome. The plain and simple recital of

his fears and agonies in this frightful situation, excites in me, after the lapse of twenty years, an emotion of terror, which cannot perhaps be produced by the whole of the admirable poem of M. De Lille on the same subject. I remember the opening of this moving episode.—

Sous les remparts de Rome et sous ces vastes
plaines,
Son des antres profundo, des voûtes souterraines,
Qui, pendant deux mille ans, creusés par les hu-
mains,
Donnèrent leur rochers aux palais des Romains.
Avec ses monumens et sa magnificence,
Rome entière sortit de cet abîme immense :
Depuis, loin du regard et du fer des Tyrans,
L'église encore naissante y cacha ses enfans,
Jusqu'au jour où du sein de cette nuit profonde,
Triomphante, elle vint donner ses lois au monde,
Et marqua de la Croix les drapeaux des Césars.

The Catacombs are an object of curiosity to all travellers whom the love of the arts attract to Italy; they throng to visit these dark galleries, (peopled with illustri-

ous recollections,) whose monuments in fresco and *bas-reliefs* have served so long as models for the imitation of our greatest artists. Several authors have described the Catacombs of Naples, and particularly those of Rome with the most minute detail. In the first rank of these literary gnomes, stands Bosio, who in the year 1632, published a description of the Catacombs of the last named city, under the title of *Roma Sotteranea*; which has since been translated into Latin, by Aringhi. The name of Bosio's work is the more apt, because it contains in effect an itinerary of a *subterraneous Rome*, and the catacombs are there depicted as the road, by which every one must travel.

The perusal of this work, which is exceedingly commendable for its fidelity, learning, and curious research, begot in me a great desire to undertake a little subterranean tour at Paris, and to range through that part of the quarries, which extend under the plain of the lesser *Mont-Rouge*,

to which their new occupation caused the name of Catacombs to be given. The day of All Souls is now approaching, an epoch, at which I usually devote a few hours to those monuments, which, as the author of *Studies of Nature*, eloquently says, are placed upon the boundaries of two worlds. I am not a disciple of the melancholy Arthur Young, who is eternally crying in a monotonous and lamentable voice,

“Death be your theme in every place and hour.”

Nothing seems to me more contrary to man's nature and happiness, than this axiom of a gloomy moralist, who, under the pretext of familiarising us with an inevitable evil, is perpetually placing its image before us. Voltaire on the other hand says rightly, “*The continual contemplation of death deceives us ; it prevents us from living.*” I still less approve of those learned triflers, of those Sybarite philosophers, who repel every serious reflection, and sport on the surface of life, without daring to think upon

its end. To enjoy it perfectly, it appears to me that its probable duration should occasionally be considered, and we should not be afraid to survey the ravages of time, if we wish to know its value, and regulate its use.

Last Monday at Madame de R *** I mentioned my intention to pay a visit to the Catacombs, and as the license sent me by the Inspector General of the Mines, afforded me an opportunity of taking a companion, several persons offered themselves; I could take but one, and though it was very clear that I would have given the preference to the young lady of the house, one of the prettiest and most amiable girls in Paris: Madame de Sessanne would absolutely venture upon this mysterious promenade with me. I feared the effect on the imagination of twenty years of age, and at first made several objections, in which her mother supported me; but nothing could induce her to renounce the project. "She had heard that in the year 1788, Madame de Polignac

and Madame de Guiche had spent a whole day in these gloomy caverns ; she 'did not think herself less courageous, and had so much confidence too in her old hermit.'—It was at length agreed that she should call for me in her carriage, next day at noon.

Madame de Sessanne was punctual to the gloomy rendezvous, and with our pockets crammed with wax tapers and phosphoric matches, (as if we intended to make a fortnight's stay under ground) we drove towards the barrier d'Enfer,* remarking on the singularity of the connexion between this name, and the place which we were about to visit.

The Principal of the works, who had been apprised of our visit the night before, conducted us by a strait staircase under the first vaults, 90 feet below the surface of the earth. For above a quarter of an hour, we followed the windings of a narrow gal-

* *Gate of Hell.* The long street which leads to the Catacombs, is also called the *Street of Hell.*

lery, where from time to time we noticed inscriptions of the date of the year, in which the different parts of these quarries were undertaken. On the roof of the vault and the whole along of our way from the entrance of the Catacombs, a black line has been traced, which might on occasion serve as a clue to any bewildered traveller who lost himself in the mazes of this labyrinth. Some projecting rocks, or a fissure in the walls, at distant intervals, interrupted the uniform aspect of this gallery, into which several smaller branches communicated, which extend themselves under the faubourg St. Jacques as far as the extremity of the Faubourg St. Germain.

Our guide made us quit for a little the course of the Catacombs, and conducted us to a gallery, known by the name of *Port Mahon*. In this quarter, a soldier who had followed Marshal Richlieu to Minorca in the year 1756, and whom his reformation had doomed to work in these quarries, amused himself at his leisure

hours in modelling in the rock, a plan of the fortifications of that island. This monument, which is not one under the cognisance of the art, testifies nevertheless in a most striking manner, the skill, the memory, and above all, the patience of the man, who, without any knowledge of architecture, without means, and without proper tools, could, unassisted execute such a work. My gentle companion was much afflicted at learning from a few words engraven on the stone, that this industrious man, after five years employment without wages on this piece of art, perished a few paces from the spot on which she stood, by the fall of a part of the rock, which he was endeavouring to prop up.

The Catacombs being the exclusive object of our curiosity, we desired our guide to conduct us to them, and we stopped but a single moment to observe a frightful, yet picturesque ruin. Several pieces of rock, supported in equilibrium on their

angular points; the strange positions of these masses, suspended in air, whose fall seemed threatened by every breath of wind, present a configuration so wonderful, that many painters of decorations, have made it the subject of study.

We reached at last a sort of vestibule, at the bottom of which was a black door, ornamented with two pillars of the Tuscan order, and surmounted with this inscription,

Hæ ultra metas requiescant, beatam spem expectantes.

The moment we set our feet in this dark enclosure, my young companion involuntarily drew closer to me, and I was startled at her paleness and sudden alteration of countenance; she made use of salts, with which I had provided myself, and said, while endeavouring to force a smile, "don't be alarmed, it is from a sudden impression on my mind, and not from fear."

We entered this palace of death ; his frightful attributes surrounded us ; the walls are covered with them ; piles of bones are moulded into arches, or raised into columns ; and art has formed from these wrecks of human nature, a species of mosaic work, whose regular appearance adds to the solemn sensation inspired by the place. Death in the bosom of these Catacombs, has something in it less repulsive than elsewhere : his ravages are past, the sepulchral worm has devoured its prey, and the remains have no longer any thing to fear, but from the hand of time, which will eventually crumble them into dust.

All the ancient cemeteries of Paris, all the churches have emptied into these vast caverns, the spoils of human kind, which had been for ages deposited with them. Ten generations are met and absorbed here : and this subterraneous population is estimated at three times the number of those who inhabit and agitate the surface of the soil.

Inscriptions placed on small columns, point out the different quarters of Paris to which these relics once belonged. There, every distinction of sex, fortune and rank, has completely disappeared. The rich robbed of his marble mausoleum; the poor bereft a little sooner of his fir coffin, here mingle together their last remains: and it is here indeed, that equality commences. What reflections, what sublime ideas arise from such images! The author of the *Genius of Christianity* deserves the office of being their interpreter. "The whole soul," says he, "trembles at the contemplation of so much inanity, and so much grandeur. While we seek in vain for expressions sufficiently majestic to describe what is so high, words sufficiently low are at the same time wanting to depict what is so vile. Every thing proclaims that we are in the empire of ruins, and in the very smell of the dust, spread under the funeral arches, we seem to breathe the times that are past."

Emily, recovering her resolution, had quitted my arm, and with the taper in her hand wandered in silence over the cheerless dwelling of the dead. The numerous inscriptions, religious, philosophical, and moral, traced on the walls, by turns attracted her attention. She bid me remark the following verses of Malfilâtre, which I believe are unpublished.

Insensés ! nous parlons en maîtres,
 Nous qui, dans l'Océan des êtres
 Nageons tristement confondus !
 Nous, dont l'existence légère,
 Pareille à l'ombre passagère,
 Commence paraît et n'est plus.*

* Blind mortals here, your masters view,
 'Mid seas of beings once like you
 We swim whole gloomy silent years,
 We whose light beings sadly fade
 Like flittings of a passing shade,
 Which form'd, is seen, then disappears.

She desired me to translate the Latin sentences for her. When I came to this

*Quæris quo jaceas post obitum loco ?
Quo non nata jacent ?*

and informed her that it signified

“ You seek where you shall be after death ?
Where were you before your birth ? ”

“ I don't see,” said she, “ either the justice or the morality of this maxim, and I am particularly at a loss to conceive that it has any thing in common with that from Addison, which I read a little further on,

“ If the soul ends with the body, whence then does our presentiment of immortality come ? ”

“ I do not approve of it any more than yourself,” replied I, “ and particularly in such a place as this. Contradictory opinions mingled together, weaken at least if they do not destroy each other. I love to believe that doubt quits man at the gate of the tomb, but hope descends with him to point out eternity on the opposite shore.”

After visiting several rooms, and wandering through the galleries which led to them; we arrived at a little chapel, at the end of which, a small expiatory altar is erected. Its form has something in it still more frightful than the rest of the Catacombs. Seeking for an inscription, which should inform us to whose manes, or whose memory it is consecrated; we read, or at least thought we read, in letters of blood—this dreadful date—2d SEPTEMBER, 1792, on a piece of granite. My companion uttered a cry of horror, and to her disturbed imagination, a long groan seemed to be heard. Surprised myself, at an unexpected sound, I started and looked anxiously round.

Our conductor then, with some trouble, opened the door to the Geological Cavern, which is to contain specimens of every mineral in the earth, under which these quarries are dug. This apartment led us to another, where the anatomical deformities are collected, classed and ranged in order. The

aberrations from nature, and the endeavours of art to assist her, are strongly visible in some of the specimens. For these two subterranean cabinets, and the general improvements which have been made for several years in the Catacombs, we are indebted to M. Héricart de Thury, Chief Engineer in the Imperial Corps of Miners.

While I was contemplating these specimens of anatomy, Madame de Sessanne was leaning at a little distance from me, on an antique altar, formed entirely of human remains. (This work, and several others of the same sort, do honour to the talent, and to the taste of M. Gambier, who presided over the arrangement of these mournful materials.) While standing in this pensive attitude, one of the roses of her bouquet scattered its leaves on the altar and pedestal. I should be unable to describe the ideas which rushed to my mind; the emotions which agitated my heart in beholding, under these gloomy vaults, an old man approaching his eightieth year,

a woman shining in all the splendour and freshness of youth and beauty, meditating on the dust of the dead, and rose leaves scattered on heaps of human bones.

The voice of our guide awoke us both from the deep reverie in which we were absorbed. We hastened to the stairs towards the east of the route to Orleans. Emily setting her foot on the first step, perceived that I stopped behind: "Come, come," said she, "don't you see they are going to shut the door." "I was thinking within myself," said I, laughing, "whether it was worth my while to go out." She ran to me, took my hand; I saw a tear start from her beautiful eye; and the emotion which I felt, left me no room to doubt, that I ought yet to live a little longer.

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No. III.—9TH JANUARY, 1813.

THE EPOCHS OF FRENCH GALLANTRY.

* In amore hæc insunt omnia.

TER. EUN. Act. 1. Sc. 1.

Toutes ces bizzareries appartiennent à l'amour.

All these follies belong to love.

AN excellent poem might be written on this subject: imprimis, it might be short, (no small recommendation at this period,

* In amore hæc omnia insunt vitia, are the words of Terence.—*Tr.*

when the style of the Gods is so little in use among mortals :) but, if the author belongs to the modern school, if he delights in the descriptive, how many fine opportunities does it present for multiplied details of *tournaments*, of *pilgrimages*, of *convents*, of *closets*, of *moon-shine*? And, if it should happen that he is imbued with this antiquated notion, that in order to be read more than once, it is necessary to excite an interest in the actions, characters, or sentiment, of how many heroical, satirical, tragical, and melancholy episodes, may not this same subject be made the basis? As for the plan, might not one imagine a very smart discussion in the *Champs-Élysées*, between *Clotilde de Surville*, *Madame de la Suse*, the *Duchesse de Berri*, or any other beauty of our times, who may have recently been removed from life? Each of these ladies might undertake to prove that the era in which she lived, was distinguished by the most amiable and brilliant gallantry; each might adduce her examples

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and proofs; Love might be selected as the umpire, and might pronounce according to his custom, without regard to right, in favour of her, whose elegance and loveliness conferred the strongest effect upon her side of the cause. Having thus indicated to poetry a subject for a picture, let us attempt in humble prose, to sketch the principal features.

“Politeness and gallantry are extinct; the revolution has utterly destroyed those delightful qualities, for which our country was distinguished among all the nations of Europe.”

Such is the indirect reproach, which I every day hear addressed to our young people; and though I do not presume to assert, that it is not in some respects well-founded, I will say, at least, that it is not altogether new. When I entered upon the world, my grandmother eulogized without ceasing, at the expence of men of my age, the easy and brilliant manners of the young gentlemen of the court of the Regent; my

mother, on her part, declaimed against the formal manners which devotion had introduced at the court of the Dauphin. Some twenty years after, the *Talons-rouges de Versailles*,* treated the young *Anglomani-
sts* of the new court as grooms. What are we to infer from these periodical complaints? That politeness and gallantry are subject to frequent variations, and that to argue that they no longer exist, because they assume other aspects, would be to resemble the man who pretended that he gave over wearing clothes, because the fashion had changed. On retracing the annals of our history, it is surprising to observe the various forms, under which gallantry is there presented; and the different parts which it there performs. Adventurous and chivalrous under the worthies of the

* This is a common expression for the young courtiers at Versailles, who wore red heels to their shoes.

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second race, it became morose and rigid under the first kings of the third, who were heartless in their actions, and only lived in the circle of the officers of their household.

The era of the crusades restored gallantry to heroic and religious forms, and added to it a sentimental feeling, to which it had hitherto been a stranger. A lover went to Palestine to conquer the heart of his *adored lady*, and by her order undertook this warlike pilgrimage. He received from her hands a scarf which he wore in every combat, and which his faithful squire was bound to lay, stained with his blood, at the feet of his mistress, if it happened that the brave knight fell under the swords of the infidels.

In those times they called love the *Undertaker (Entrepreneur)* of great actions. *Ah! if my Mistress saw me!* exclaimed a knight of Fleurange as he mounted to the assault. So severe were the laws of gallantry, that every warrior convicted of having slandered the sex, was excluded from assemblies and tournaments. The

slightest insult offered to a woman, of whatsoever condition of life, imprinted an indelible blot. Discretion was one of the characters of gallantry at this memorable epoch. The amours of Thiebault Count de Champagne, and Queen Blanche, afford a striking proof of this fact. So thick is the veil under which they shrouded themselves, that after all the historical and critical dissertations, of which they have been the object for five hundred years, the nature of their sentiments and of their connexion still remains a mystery. It is worthy of remark, that the most authentic testimony which we have of the love of a prince, and, what is more, of a poet for a young and beautiful queen, is to be found in an ancient chronicle, of which I shall quote a few lines, in order to give an idea of the language of gallantry in the thirteenth century :

“ On this occasion, Queen Blanche was present, who said to the Count (Thiebault) that he should not take up arms against the

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corner of the *Rue Barbette* in 1407, which event was the signal for a disastrous war, under the desolation of which France was nearly destroyed.

The reign of Charles VII. is one of the most celebrated epochs of French gallantry: at that period, two women in a great measure decided the fate of the monarchy and of the monarch. Charles, slumbering in the arms of Agnes Sorel, suddenly awoke at the sight of the heroine of Saint-Remi; his courage revived, and, prepared to follow the Amazon under the walls of Orleans, he inscribed with the point of his sword on the bed-chamber wall of his beloved Agnes, the following verse, which was as gallant as it was heroic:

Gente Agnès, qui tant bien m'évance,
Dans le mien Cœur demeurera
Plus que l'Anglais en notre France.*

* These lines admit of being paraphrased:
“ Dear Agnes, whom I love so well,
Thou longer in my heart shalt dwell,
Tho' left till tried the battle's chance,
Than English shall remain in France.

All the lords of the court of Charles VII., and particularly the bastard of Orleans, that illustrious *Dunois*, legitimated by victory, as Duclos has most happily said, were conspicuous for their bravery and their gallantry. I remark as a circumstance peculiar to our history, that these two qualities are almost always to be found united in the persons, whose names are handed down to posterity with the greatest renown. This fact may probably account for the love of glory, which forms so prominent a part of the character of the female sex in France, and which seems to exclude every coward from the honour of participating in their favour.

The mysterious politics of Louis XI., his gloomy character, his suspicions, his cruelties, his designs against the great vassals of the crown, did not in the slightest degree assimilate with the amiable manners of the preceding reign. Margaret of Scotland, however, who loved poetry and literature, and was gifted with an enlightened mind, preserved for a considerable time at the

court of her austere husband, that urbanity and politeness, of which she was herself the model. This was the Princess who embraced the poet Alain Chartier, when asleep in one of the saloons of the palace.

Towards the end of the reign of Louis XII., gallantry resumed its empire. His Majesty on his third marriage, espousing a very young princess, deemed it necessary to conform his tastes and habits to those of his youthful queen. This complacency hastened his dissolution.

"The good king," (says a historian of those times) "in compliment to his wife, entirely changed his mode of life; for instead of dining as he had been accustomed to do at eight o'clock, he now dined at noon; instead of retiring to rest at six o'clock in the evening, he often did not go to bed till midnight."

The duke of Angoulême, afterwards Francis I., became enamoured of the Queen, and this first passion, betraying a rather too violent affection for the sex, at the same time developed that elegance of

manners, that exquisite politeness, those gentlemanly feelings, (as he himself termed them) which spread such a blaze of splendor over his reign.

Ascending the throne at the age of twenty-one, Francis I. devoted himself to the pleasant task of attracting the fair sex to his court, and of detaining them there by the charming bonds of a chivalrous gallantry, which the whole nation hastened to imitate. Love intrigues, tournaments, carousals, distinguished every day of a reign, in which the beautiful Duchesses of Estampes and Valentinois, shone in the foremost rank, in which the Admiral Bonivet rendered himself famous by his great successes, in which the Chevalier, without fear (*sans peur*), Bayard himself did not disdain to consecrate to the fair, some of the moments stolen from glory.

After Henry II., who inherited the taste of his father, and who fell a victim to his fondness for tournaments, gallantry disguised itself for half a century under

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forms so absurd, so foolish, so little French, that it is impossible to recollect them, or at least to declare what we remember.

It re-appeared with Henry IV., less modest, less polished, but more lively, and more energetic, than under Francis I. The following *billet* from the worthy monarch to the Duchess of Beaufort, will paint the gallant manners of this epoch, much better than I could hope to pourtray them.

“ MY DEAR LOVE,

“ Two hours after the receipt of this note, you will see that Cavalier, who is extremely fond of you, called the King of France and Navarre, titles certainly honourable, but very troublesome: that of your lover is much more delicious. All the three together are good, with whatever *sauce** they

* This is an idiomatic phrase in the original, but the whole letter is worth preserving in a note:

“ Mes belles amours, deux heures après l’ar-

are dressed, and I am firmly determined not to yield them to any one."

Gallantry was a pleasure at the court of Henry IV.; it became a matter of business at that of Louis XIV. It is thus, for example, that Madame De la Fayette speaks of it:

"Ambition and gallantry were the soul of this court, and alike monopolized the attention of the men and women: the former had so many interests, and so many different cabals, and the latter, so heartily participated in them all, that love intrigues mingled in every affair of state, and every affair of state was mingled with love intrigues. Nobody escaped the contagion;

rivée de ce Porteur, vous verrez ce Cavalier qui vous aime fort, qu'on appelle le Roi de France et de Navarre, titres certainement honorables, mais bien pénibles; celui de votre amant est bien plus délicieux. Tous trois ensemble sent bons, à quelque sauce qu'on les mette, et je suis bien résolu à ne les céder à personne."

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no one was tranquil, neutral, or indifferent. They dreamt only of ambition, of pleasure, of service, or of mischief: they were neither acquainted with languor nor laziness; but were incessantly occupied with enjoyments and amours."

It is worthy of observation, that at this epoch, gallantry was so much participated between the court and the city, that its votaries not only often joined in the same pursuits; but that upon more than one occasion, in the course of the grand age,* they met and opposed each other. The *Marais* and the *Place-Royale* became, for the first time, the points of union or of contest, for the choice spirits and the great noblemen. The Grammonts, the Villarceaux, the D'Effiat, there met Marion de Lorme, or Ninon de l'Enclos to escort them to the cospé, the chapel, or the carriage. The gallantry of the court was noble, decent, perhaps

* The age of *Louis le Grand*.

even a little too ceremonious: that of the city, of which Ninon was the head of the school, without being remarkable for extreme reserve, was not, however, exempt from a sort of mysticism, which tended to spiritualize sentiment, and give currency and credit to the precious jargon of Clélie and Artamène.* One of the foremost gallants of the age, and one of the most zealous devotees of the modern Aspasia, Saint-Evremond, thus addressed her in a poem, written for consolation during a disorder which threatened the destruction of her beauty.

Si ce visage taut vanté
 Perdait ces appas qu'on encense,
 J'amerais lors votre beauté
 Comme on vous aime en votre absence:

Oh ! if your loveliness were reft,
 Nor trace of charm, nor feature left :
 Your beauty still I'd love the more ;
 As absent, I yourself adore,

* Romances of that time.

The excessive politeness of Louis XIV., who would not retain his hat upon his head in the presence of a woman, of what rank soever she might be, was not the only example set before the eyes of the courtiers. The brilliant Lauzun distinguished himself by a species of manners entirely the reverse, and even at that period displayed an *insolence of fashion*, which has since been carried to perfection! The customs which gallantry introduced into the great world were a protection against the caprices of fashion. We may remember that the Marquis de Vardes, celebrated for the elegance of his manners, and for the triumphs which he had enjoyed, on repairing to court after several years of exile, was received with a burst of general laughter: he made his complaint to the king, with as much grace as skill. “*Sire*,” (said he,) “*I perceive that when one has the misfortune to be banished from your Majesty, he is worse than unfortunate, he becomes ridiculous.*”

The reforms which Madame de Maintenon introduced at court, the extreme constraint to which the Duke of Orleans was obliged to submit in the presence of a monarch bigotted to the observance of the most minute forms of devotion, prepared the way for that excess of licentiousness, of scandal, and of folly, which acquired the name of gallantry under the regency.

The misfortunes of the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV., the fatality which hung upon the royal family, who were almost entirely swept away by death in the course of a single year, had banished gallantry from a court, or rather from a monastery of which Madame de Maintenon was the abbess. The Duke of Orleans, unable to conform to *Rule*, indemnified himself at the Palais Royal, for the curb which he endeavoured to impose upon himself at Versailles, in the presence of Madame de Maintenon, who mortally hated him, and of the king who feared him, even when he did him justice. *My nephew is*

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nothing but a boaster of crimes, said Louis XIV., and in this short sentence afforded a more correct idea of the character of the Regent, than is to be found in the philippics of his enemies, or the eulogies of his flatterers.

Quand Auguste avait bu, la Pologne était ivre.

“ When Augustus had drank, Poland was drunk.” This observation of the Great Frederick is still more applicable to France, where the manners of the Prince have so prodigious an influence upon the manners of the nation. On the death of Louis XIV. the court instantly assumed a new appearance: Madame de Maintenon was no sooner banished to St. Cyr, than the women, tearing off the mask of religion which they had assumed to render themselves acceptable to her, shewed that it was impossible to be more ardently disposed than they were to enter into the innovations of gallantry to which the Regent led the way.

The decorum, however, which the age of the King seemed to demand, the presence of the Bishop of Frejus, his preceptor, the ceremonious forms of the ancient court, which the old *Marechal* de Villeroy, the Governor of Louis XV., persevered in observing, still perpetuated at the Tuileries a remnant of etiquette, which the Regent sought every opportunity to overturn. It was with this design that he authorized the establishment of the masked balls of the opera, the first idea of which originated with the Abbé, afterwards Cardinal Dubois. The public treasure was exhausted;—in order to meet these expences, to provide for the extravagance of his favourites (whom he called his *wheels, roues*), the luxury of his mistresses, and the follies of his daughter, the Duchess of Berri, the Regent had recourse to farmers of the revenue; that he might procure money from them, it was necessary that he should facilitate their measures for obtaining it;—and they were not of that description of persons to throw

away the advantages of so fine an opportunity. The public purse passed into the hands of rigorous collectors, whence it only found its way to feed this mercenary gallantry, this shameful traffic between wealth and beauty, of which Le Sage, in *Turcaret*, has drawn so admirable and faithful a picture.

In the midst of this licentiousness and disorder, the measure of which was complete, politeness and the graces still found two places of refuge—the *Court of Scèaux*, and the *Society of the Temple*. The former, of which the Duchess of Maine was the chief, renouncing political intrigue, combined in its circle all that was most amiable and illustrious in France.—Fontenelle, La Motte, Saint Aulaire, were among its members, and Voltaire carried to perfection that exquisite taste, that delicate and satirical tact, for which he is distinguished above all other writers. The *Society of the Temple*, of which the Grand Prior de Vendome was the soul, was not

entirely so regular : it professed a doctrine a little more Epicurean, but favourable to mental enjoyments, to suavity of manners, and the charms of social union—even wisdom shut her eyes to those things which might elsewhere have appeared reprehensible.

Before adverting to the epoch of a new gallantry, which the death of the Regent introduced, I ought to say a few words respecting a man whose scandalous influence was felt throughout the whole age in which he lived. Richelieu burst upon the world in possession of a great name, an immense fortune, a considerable portion of spirit, grace, and merit. He devoted his whole life to the sex, and became by that means their idol. His earlier successes attracted notice ; he had the good fortune or the address to fall twice into the same course with the Regent, and that prince, of all others the least practicable, manifested his resentment in a way which augmented the reputation of his young rival.

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The passionate fondness of the ladies of the court, some romantic intrigues with females of a lower class, a shameful adventure with a young trader of the Rue St. Antoine, a suspected connexion with a princess of the blood, a pretended conspiracy, the Bastile, and a forced marriage, all conspired to render the Duke de Richelieu, the leading man of fashion and the hero of the gallantry of the 18th century. Equally fortunate in having attributed to him the success of the battle of Fontenoy, and the conquest of Mahon; distinguished in his embassy to Vienna for pageantry, which was made to pass for policy; the friend of Voltaire (to whom he owes the best part of his reputation), received before him into the French Academy, he acquired at the smallest cost, glory of every possible kind; and deprived at the close of his life of the favour which he had for so long a period enjoyed, he was consoled by causing himself to be proclaimed *the Sultan of the Green-room (le Sultan des Coulisses)*.

Louis XV., married at an early age to a Princess, with whose perfections he was so deeply smitten as to discover charms in her which even his courtiers could not perceive, speedily lost this happy illusion, of which the Countess de Mailly was the first to make him ashamed.—It does not enter into my plan to follow this Prince through the career of his gallantries, which had only an indirect effect upon the public character. Gallantry, at this period, had nothing in common with love, not even so much as the desire of possession, to which was attached much less value than to the scandal which might result from it: the word love was merely used to express a caprice of vanity, a fragile tie, a silken string so slight as often to break without the knowledge of those who had formed it.—This libertinism gave birth to a peculiar jargon, in which the most odious vices, the most dissolute actions, the most scandalous adventures were detailed in a decorous language, the use of which was

adopted in good company. Gresset has preserved some traces of this in his comedy of *Mechant*; but it is in the romances of the younger Crebillon, and in the songs of Callé, that we must look for the letter and the spirit of these times. The merit of a man of fashion was then estimated, not according to the number of women whom he had *had* (avait eues), to speak in the phrase of the time, but by the number of those he had dishonoured. All Paris has known one of the Corypheuses of this despicable school, who employed no other means,—whom it cost nothing more to ruin the reputation of twenty women, than the sending of his chariot to their door at four o'clock in the morning.

The establishment of the *Parc-aux-Cerfs*, suggested the idea of *Petites-Maisons*, mysterious asylums consecrated to pleasure, whence the ladies of the court were finally expelled by the courtesans. The former re-assumed all their rights when, succeeding Madame de Pom-

padour who held a middle rank between the two classes, Madame Dubarry came with such unblushing effrontery to disgrace the palace of kings.

The ensuing reign commenced with happy reforms; the empire of courtesans was overthrown at Versailles; but its seat transferred to *Luciennes*, kept Paris in dependence to the era of the revolution. The luxury of Duthé and of Thévenin rivalled in many public entertainments the pomp of royalty itself. Virtuous women then assumed a part to which it is to be wished they would oftener have recourse; they distinguished themselves by a marked degree of exterior modesty, and by the extreme simplicity of their dress. The men took them at their word, and as an essay of the English manners, which were becoming the fashion, the *petits-maitres* of the court and city treated the women with a *respect the most impertinent*; the drawing rooms and cabinets were deserted for the tavern, tennis, and horse-racing. After having

spent the morning with grooms and jockeys*, our tonish gentlemen passed the evenings in undress, emulating their valets in the honours of the public houses, or in their appearance at the theatres of the Boulevarts.

It would be shocking to associate the word gallantry with the frightful disorders of which the Revolution made those who were not its accomplices the witnesses or victims: but in refraining from painting any part of this picture, which does not belong to my subject, it may not be amiss to remark, that at this terrible epoch the women, and particularly in Paris, are known to have preserved, ennobling themselves by their conduct, the finest traits of the national character. They may be divided into two classes—the victims and the heroines; the first, in the prisons, afforded an example of courage, and of that practical philosophy, one of the laws of which was to employ in

* These words are now naturalized in France.

doing good those days which every moment threatened to terminate : the other, devoted to the noblest occupations, and though still at liberty, in a situation not less perilous, consecrated their whole existence to save, to preserve, or to defend the lives of a father, son, friend, or husband, whom at last in more than one instance they were seen voluntarily to accompany to an honourable scaffold.

In those times of misery and disgrace, when compassion was held to be treason, and when politeness was a capital crime, urbanity, the social affections, mutual regard, all the amiable qualities which enter into the composition of the French character, sought refuge in the dungeons, where love often discovered the means of soothing or of dissipating the horrors of present imprisonment and well-founded apprehension of the future destiny.

The 9th Thermidor* arrived ; to days of

* 27 July, 1794—the fall of Robespierre.

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mourning suddenly succeeded days of rejoicing: an age of oblivion was in a moment heaped upon the misfortunes of the past; pleasure alone was pursued; the evenings of the Hotel Thélusson, and of the Pavillion d'Hanovre, the balls of Richlieu and Frescati, re-assembled together all those who survived, and whose earliest anxiety seemed to be to dance upon the ruins. The *Victims* had their ball, where the very same women whose heroism we so highly admired a few weeks before, were not remarkable for any thing but the absurdity of their dress and the inconceivable levity of their behaviour.

The re-establishment of the monarchical power has put an end to these saturnalia, and France, restored to its ancient institutions, has recovered, as if by enchantment, its manners, its customs, and something of that pristine gallantry, of which it was thought the tradition was lost. I am aware that from time to time certain censorious cynics complain that our young Frenchmen

conduct themselves in a manner too cavalier for polished society, and betray a degree of confidence bordering on presumption; but can we without injustice exact, that young people whose education makes men of them so early that the majority have, at twenty years of age, their names associated with several victories; can we, I repeat, exact from these, our young contemporaries, reared in the camp under the flag of their country, that they should be able to present themselves in a fashionable party with all that elegance of manners, that refinement of politeness and gallantry, which can only be acquired by constant intercourse with female society, and which is, with good reason, esteemed in France the finish of education? This last part of the task of women is very agreeable to perform, and these delightful instructors are too great admirers of glory not to be willing to receive her votaries into the number of their pupils.

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No. IV.—23d JAN. 1813.

A HACKNEY-COACHMAN'S DAY.

Lætus sorte tuâ vives sapienter.

HORACE, Ep. 10.

La sagesse est de vivre heureux dans son état.

**Wisdom consists in making ourselves content
with our situations.**

**“IT is very singular,” as was remarked to
me some days ago; by a foreigner, a man
of considerable talent, “that in your lan-
guage there are certain words to which, in
common conversation, we attach a meaning**

totally different from that which belongs to them according to your dictionary. How could a man born any where but on the banks of the Seine or of the Loire, guess that the phrases—" *That is a man of the world—who has seen the world—who knows the world,*" signify in their new acceptation, that is a man of such a place, who has never quitted the little circle to which he belongs, and who knows nothing beyond one small part of a class the least numerous in society?" The stranger was right; but I astonished him much more, by informing him that the greater portion of those who use this metonymy, suppose they give to the words their literal meaning, and really believe that there is no other *world* but that in the midst of which they live, and of which they form a part. Attempt to prove to them that society is composed of many classes, all of which, from the highest to the lowest, have their particular manners, customs, and forms, the examination of which is neither destitute in interest nor instruction,

and they will listen to you with the most profound disdain, and scruple not to assume that *you* yourself have not mixed much with the world. For a long time past I have accustomed myself to disregard the prejudices of the *bon ton*; and in order to become better acquainted with the inhabitants of a house, have taken opportunities of studying them in every story. The desire of ennobling all things, of banishing contrasts, by reducing every object to conformity with established principles, begins to be conspicuous even in the arts and literature. Men fear to degrade their gravers, their pens, or their pencils, by condescending to delineate the manners of ordinary life; and, abusing the principle, that the arts ought only to imitate nature refined and elevated, they expose themselves to the danger of becoming mere affected mannerists. Good taste may applaud at the same time the widely differing beauties of Raphael and Teniers; the woes of *Iphigenia* and the drolleries of *Little John*.

The artist whose ambition is not bounded by a desire to succeed in painting Arabian landscapes, ought to furnish his *Album* with figures from all conditions in life, and though there are many of which the originals can only be found in garrets, in sea-ports, and in alehouses, it is to such places, whatever may be said on the subject *in the world*, that the artist ought to direct his steps, in order to sketch their portraits. I have often heard it said of Prévile, that he had taken from an alehouse at Courtille his comic character of *La Rissole*. It was at the same school that Taconet studied so admirably the manners and habits of cobblers, that this excellent actor never finds himself more at home than in the character of a cord-wainer. If the painter and the actor have often occasion to seek characters at the alehouse, the dramatic poet, the moralist, and the romance-writer, will find it no less their interest to go thither sometimes, to take their notes.

This little preamble was necessary to ex-

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cuse in the eyes of people of *the world* the adventure which I am about to relate. Last Monday I took a walk in the "*Jardin des Plantes*," and had taken, leisurely enough, rather a long stroll for a man of my years. In returning I found myself a little fatigued, and as I was still far from home, I determined to hire a coach. I was directed to a stand in the street "*des Filles du Calvaire*," where I found a number of carriages ranged on the left hand side of the way, and the horses, left to themselves, seeking at the bottom of a bag suspended from their necks, a few oats, the remainder of the day's peck which was their allowance; but from one end of the line to the other, I could discover nothing of the coachmen. A dealer in rags noticed my embarrassment from his stall, and obligingly told me, pointing with his hand to a cabaret of the meanest appearance, that "the coachmen you are looking for are at dinner with Mother Henry." I went in, and was instantly so much attracted by the novel

scene which presented itself, that I was induced, instead of a coachman, to call for a dinner. Being but indifferently dressed, Dame Henry fixed her eyes very attentively upon me, and suffered me to repeat my call twice before she invited me into *the Parlour*, to which I was now conducted by a little girl, armed with an enormous tinned copper ladle, full of a greasy water, which was here emphatically called *broth*. I found in this parlour, that is to say in a place enclosed by four walls, blacked with smoke from top to bottom, about a dozen of hackney-coachmen seated in rows on each side of a very long and narrow table, at the end of which I took my place. After giving my neighbours their soup, the little girl, whom I heard them call Manette, placed before me a pint of wine, a tin cup, a pewter spoon, and an iron fork, the knives being (according to the custom of this house) fastened to the table by a small metal chain. In serving up a very frugal repast, which however was not so bad as I

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had expected it would be, Manette asked, "have you brought any bread with you?" and my answering in the negative appeared to add to the good opinion she had previously entertained of me. My dinner was but a pretext—my object was only to see and hear, and I cannot complain of having lost my time. At first the conversation was not general, each being engaged in chat with his neighbour. One complained of the conduct of his proprietor, another applauded the arrangement he had succeeded in making with his. *This*, being paid by the day, looked to find his account in what he could subtract from the food allowed for his horses; while *that* related all the little tricks he had played off to multiply the number of his fares, and to add to his *pour boires**. I entered into conversation with the *whip* who was seated next to me, a fat jovial fellow, apparently about forty-five years of age. A bottle of wine, which

* Drink-money.

I called for, and of which I poured out several glasses for him, gained me his entire confidence, and in less than a quarter of an hour, he had given me a complete outline of his history. I found that he had been successively, coachman to a kept-woman, from whose service he had been dismissed for a trifling indiscretion; stable keeper to a young gentleman, whose creditors had seized his horses; and courier to a banking house, for which he had travelled seven and twenty times to Hamburgh. Fatigued with so many journies, he had rested himself, and passed two years in the service of an old physician, whose one-horse carriage (*la demi fortune*) he had driven, and who had closed his career by following his patients—to the other world. Carried away by ambition, he had next taken the reins of the carriage of a minister of state, whom he had had the misfortune to overturn a short time back, on the route from St. Cloud. The loss of reputation in all the stables, consequent upon this accident, had in-

duced him to try his fortune on the public stand, where he found himself so comfortable, that he would not change his *old Benjamin* for the finest livery in Paris. Every day, to be sure, was not equally fortunate, but one made up for another, and such a day as he had just passed, consoled him for the disappointment of many others. I was curious to know the particulars of this lucky day, and a second bottle of fifteen-penny wine which I ordered, made him as willing to recount, as I was to listen to them.

“On Saturday morning,” said he, “at seven o’clock, in coming from my proprietor’s house, which is in the street *de Buffault*, *Little Grey* my off horse gave two kicks.—‘Aha! that’s good,’ said I to myself, ‘the windfalls will be lucky to day; this is an omen which I had never known to fail.’ And truly, just as I had turned the corner of the street, two men, one of whom carried a square box under his arm, stopped me, got into my coach, and or-

dered me to drive them to the *Carrières** of Montmartre. When I arrived at the barrier, I perceived two young men waiting, who made a sign for me to stop ; those whom I had brought there, left the carriage, and retired with the persons I have just mentioned. I followed them at a slow pace, they quitted the high road, and from my seat, I observed that they descended into a sort of ravine. I had scarcely lost sight of them, when I heard the sound of fire arms. A few minutes afterwards one of the gentlemen I had brought there, ran to me, put twelve francs into my hand, and disappeared, having first desired me to wait for the others. The two young men I had met at the barrier, one of whom was wounded, got into my carriage, and I drove them with all the speed my horses could exert, to the baths of Tivoli. For this I received six francs more. This is

* Burying place.

one of the most lucrative duels I have ever had.

“ As I gaily regained the Boulevard, I happened, without at all intending it, to entangle my vehicle with the wheels of an Auditor's cabriolet, who for this offence would have sent me to prison. The Commissary of Police however, decided in my favour, and the master of the cabriolet was obliged to pay me for double the time which he had caused me to lose. Before I had reached the stand, I was engaged by a gentleman, who from wearing his silk stockings and dress coat at eleven in the morning, I recognised to be a candidate for a seat in the legislative body. I conducted him to the houses of all the Senators of the Chaussée D'Antin, and of the Faubourg Saint Honoré. He was nowhere received, and would not have paid me more than the regular fare for the time we had passed together, if my watch, which was right by his when we set off, had not gained an hour by the time we arrived at

the place last mentioned. Scarcely had I disposed of the candidate at his door in the Rue *Froid-manteau*, when a chambermaid made a sign for me to follow her, and place my coach at the corner of the street Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre. After examining my vehicle to see that it had blinds, she gave me a five franc piece, took my number in writing, and bid me wait there for a lady who would soon be with me, and whom I should know by her muff. This was a good opportunity for giving my horses breakfast, and for taking some myself. I drew from the boot of my coach a bag of oats, which I divided between my poor beasts, giving however, as I ought, the best share to little grey, as a reward for his lucky omen. I was just going to enter the neighbouring *Cabaret*, when the lady with the muff arrived, who, turning to my carriage, lifted her veil to read the number. 'This is it,' said I, opening the door. She stepped in, supporting herself on my arm, and looking

around with some perturbation. I asked where I was to drive; she answered in a low voice, 'to the baths of Saint Joseph:' I mounted my box, and we were presently there. Before getting out, the lady, without asking if I had been paid my fare, took a Napoleon from a corner of her handkerchief, in which it had been tied, and bid me make haste and take a crown. I saw she was in a hurry, and of course I took plenty of time to untie my leathern purse, and lamented that I had no change to give her except halfpence. She was on the rack in consequence of the delay. I offered to go and try to get her change in some of the shops. She was now out of all patience, as I had hoped she would, and stepping out of the carriage, exclaimed as she ran on 'keep it all.'—'Many thanks my fair dame, and may another give you as much pleasure as you have afforded me.' It was two o'clock; I placed my coach on the stand, and went to finish my break-

fast at the top of la Rue Mont Martre. On returning to my horses, I found two young girls in my coach, who, with an embarrassed air, told me to take them to Charrier's on the Boulevard of the Temple. When we arrived there, they sent me to the Tennis Court to inquire for Mr. Prosper. He was then engaged in an important game, and had just lost three points, one after the other. He consigned me to the devil with all the usual eloquence of a losing gamester; but after some reflection, told me to inform those who had sent me, that in a few moments he would join them in the Turkish garden. I set them down there, and my fare was again very liberally paid.

“ Standing behind my seat, and walking my horses along the Boulevards, I was counting on my fingers, how much I had already made, when I heard myself called by name from a Grocer's shop. The master's wife had lain-in the day before, and the child was about to be christened.

The coach sent for, was not sufficient to contain the company, and my comrade called me to his assistance; my coach was the handsomest, and I had the honour of carrying to church the attendant, the child, the nurse, the god-father, the god-mother, the husband, and his wife's brother. The witnesses got into the other coach. This fare, of which I shared the profit with my comrade, brought me six francs clear, besides a glass of liquor, which the grocer gave each of us on his counter.

“ It was now time for the theatres : while waiting until the Ambigu-Comique should be over, I went to a wine vaults with several other hackney coachmen : we played at cards for our dinner;—I was in luck, and won my share of the reckoning ; I had ordered two bottles of wine to treat my comrades, but before they were empty, a little boy came to inform me, that a gentleman and lady having left the theatre before the end of the play, were waiting for me in my

coach. I ran to it; a man's voice answering beforehand to the usual questions, cried through the window, '*I take you by the hour, walk your horses, and go where you please.*' I understood my customer, and behold me drawling my coach towards *la Madalaine*, (*the Magdalen.*) Opposite the pastry cook's *des Italiens*, I felt myself pulled by my great coat—I stopped—the gentleman got out, gave me a crown, and told me to take back the lady whom he left in the coach to Gaillon-street, No. —

"There I closed my day's work. It was only ten o'clock, but my pocket was full, and my horses were tired. I went home to my master, and inspecting the inside of my vehicle, I found a gentleman's watch and a pair of lady's gloves: I took them the next day to the prefecture of police, but, thanks to my luck, nobody claimed them."

When the fellow had concluded his story, and drank my health in the last glass

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of wine, he offered to carry me home gratis, but I would only consent to go with him, on condition he would accept a *pour boire*, of double the amount of his fare.

No. V.—7th FEB. 1812.

THE DEBTOR'S PRISON.

Happiness, though often crossed by misfortune,
is more frequently destroyed by misconduct.

PRIOR.

IMPRISONMENT for debt is a necessary consequence of the progress, and perhaps of the abuse of civilization. In France, under the two first races of her kings, creditors had no other recourse but to proceed against real property. The President Hainaut, cites the case of Bouchard de Montmorency, who owed a considerable sum to Adam, Abbot of St. Denis. "They could not arrest him," says the

Abbe Suger, "because such was not the usage of that period; but they procured an order from the king, to pillage his lands to satisfy the amount of their claim." In these times of barbarism, the law treated those with ridicule who contracted debts without possessing ability to discharge them, (matters are strangely altered since !) the surrender of their effects, which they were compelled to make, was accompanied by a very singular ceremony. The debtor, gentle or simple, was obliged to salute the earth three times *avec son derrière* (*nudis clunibus*), crying at the same time, *I surrender my effects!* Saint-Foix states that they have still at Padua the stone of shame (*lapis vituperii*) on which this punishment was inflicted. I imagine that this custom may be the origin of a similar penitence which is imposed in the little game of *forfeits* upon those who cannot in any other way acquit themselves of their obligations. I do not know whether it is, upon the single authority of the author of

the *Essais sur Paris*, admitted as proven that anterior to the reign of *Louis-le-Jeune*, a debtor might dispense with the payment of his debts, provided he fought with his creditors; in this case, Saint-Foix was a man to confound his particular history with that of the manners of our ancestors; as he paid very ill and fought very often, he was interested in causing it to be believed that a person might substitute the one for the other!

But be that as it may, I remember a time, (so near the present, that there is no reason to think it impossible to be revived) when it was the height of fashion to be in debt;—when it was reckoned more honourable to have creditors than lacqueys in waiting in an antichamber. This vice of a few young men of rank, by insensible degrees, infected all classes in society; but it was reserved for the Englishman, Bielfeld, to exalt it into a principle of political right, to write a book for the express purpose of demonstrating, that na-

tional debt is an irrefragable proof of the prosperity of a state, and thence indisputably deduce, that England is infinitely richer than France.

I never could understand the point, and still less the moral of witticisms upon the subject of debt. It appears to me that these engagements resemble others, and that there is neither spirit nor honour in failing to fulfil them. I am well aware that, by one of those anomalies of which it would not be difficult to find many other examples in our customs, the law, in this instance, condemns what society sanctions; I know that while the courts deal severely with the debtors, the theatres treat the creditors with ridicule, and that it seems to be agreed to laugh in turn at the different parts that are performed in the world, and upon the stage. But the creditors, tired out with fruitless endeavours, and incensed at the endless breach of promises, ultimately conclude with persevering, till they obtain a settlement, in which the debtor, to

obtain new credit, pays at least a part of his debt with the help of the money-lenders. These gentlemen, always well informed of the wants and resources of the young spendthrifts, know better than any other person the value of an acceptance on stamped paper. The gull who falls into their clutches may well repeat,

Des billets tant qu'on veut ; point de lettres de change.*

it is only at enormous interest that they obtain discount, and the principal too, is paid them in crowns that have been clipped and sweated far below their standard value. The time passes swiftly, the day of payment arrives, the bill is protested, the writ taken out, and the next day, on his return from riding, as he enters the *Café Tortoni*, one of our dashing fellows, is, without respect for the fashion, invited by a decision

* As many notes as you will, but no bills of exchange.

of the tribunal of commerce, to adjourn to the *Rue de la Clef*, and take up his abode there within the narrow bounds of four walls, till a relenting father, a fond mistress, or a generous friend restore him to his wonted agreeable habits, and by paying his old debts, afford him the means of contracting new ones.

It must be noticed, however, that it becomes every day more difficult than it has hitherto been in Paris, to plunge very deeply into debt. The merchants are less credulous, the mechanics less patient, the money-lenders less numerous, and the courts of justice more rigorous.

I never had any thing to do with a bill in my life; the bare sight of a stamped paper gives me the ague, and I am unacquainted with any idea more frightful than that of a bailiff or an attorney, though I hold them to be the most honest people in the world (and I take witnesses to this declaration); I have never then (the Revolution excepted) had occasion to see prisons

or prisoners, but this has not prevented me from perusing, with a lively interest, the work of the philanthropist Howard.—Arrived at my time of life, without having once crossed the threshold of a gaol, I flattered myself that I should never have occasion to visit these dreary abodes.—I, however, received the following letter.

“Prison of ———, 25th Jan. 1813.

“I would not have addressed you, Sir, if my confinement arose from a cause of which I ought to be ashamed. A hard-hearted creditor has thought proper, in pursuing a bill of exchange, with which I had entrusted him, and which I cannot pay, to obtain and execute a writ against my person, in consequence of which, I am imprisoned till it may please my father to honour my signature. I reckon upon your friendship for persuading him to abridge the lesson which he might otherwise be tempted to give me, and from which I

promise you I shall profit as much as if it were made ever so much longer ; come and see me, I beg of you.

EUGENE DE MERSEUIL."

This letter afflicted more than it surprised me. Eugene is the son of one of my distant relations ; his father, an ardent agriculturist, never quits the country, and permits his son to live in Paris with an allowance of 500 francs per month, which he pays him regularly, but which is not, as may readily be believed, enough for a young man fond of keeping horses, and addicted to other extravagances of a still more expensive cast. * * * * * I have hazarded some advice, but it was ill received. I was affronted, and for six months, until this epistle arrived, had heard nothing of my young relation. I did not hesitate in resolving to answer his letter in person ; —I hired a coach, and told the driver to proceed to * * * " Perhaps, Sir, you are going to see some one there."—" Yes,

friend. You know where this prison is?"

"Perfectly well; I have been employed during a whole year, and almost every day by a *Guard of Commerce*?"—"And what does this *Guard of Commerce* do?"—"My Master? Oh! he takes people to gaol."—"I understand you; he is a sort of bailiff, who is employed in arrests."—"Exactly; I have seen him in all lights——and if I might depend upon you"———"It must be another time then, friend, for I am in a hurry now."—"I have done," replied our citizen, "I must, however, put you in the right train: have you your permission?"—"Here it is."—"That won't do; you must go and get another at the Prefecture of the Police."—"Drive on then to the Prefecture."

Having got my permission made out according to rule, I pursue my way, and arrive at——. The coachman draws up before a building, of which the severe architecture, high walls, low gates, and great number of sentinels, sufficiently indicated

the destination. The centinel pointed out to me as the principal entrance a gate about four feet in height: I knock; the grating of bolts and of a triple lock is heard; it opens; I enter, and five or six turnkeys, who are drinking and smoking in a sort of dungeon, demand of me, in that amiable tone which is so peculiar to them, "*Where is your authority for coming here?*" I shew them my permission, and the door is speedily shut upon me. I cross many courts, and arrive by several dark passages, the low doors of which open and shut with horrid noise, at the registry, where I describe the object of my visit, and they give me the address of the prisoner. Under the guidance of a door-keeper, I ascend a steep stair leading to long corridors, on both sides of which are ranged the numerous cells that give this place the look of an immense cloister.

The chamber of Eugene was on the third floor; the furniture by no means superb; but with the utmost contempt for superfluity,

it might boast of possessing necessities. With the exception of the bed, which the gaoler is bound to provide at a stated price, all the moveables (which consisted of two chairs, a stove, a table, a pitcher, and some small utensils) belonged to the *Chum** of my young scape-grace, "who had found it," as he assured us, "more convenient, and, particularly, more economical during the one-and-twenty months he had resided there, to lay in his own furniture, in preference to renting an apartment ready furnished." The two prisoners were at breakfast when I arrived: they insisted upon my sitting down at table with them, and when I betrayed my surprise at the delicacy of a dish which was served up to us, they told me that an excellent cook, who had been ruined in his establishment in the Rue de Clery, had discovered no other means to retrieve his affairs than to procure himself to be shut up in gaol, where, protected

* *Co-Chambriste.*

from creditors and bad customers, he exercised his craft, without paying rent or licence, and certain of acquiring in a few years as much money as would enable him to renew his trade, and be ruined again in the Palais-Royal.

We were still at table when a very comely dame entered upon a visit to the companion of Eugene: although she appeared to me to be more accustomed to *Boudoirs* than to prisons, she had not the air of being altogether unacquainted with this. She informed me that a bell which we heard, was rung to announce the hour when the prisoners were allowed to walk in the garden. Perhaps the young lady had something to communicate in confidence to her friend: I wished also to speak in private with mine, and took advantage of this circumstance to go out with him. We had already taken several turns in a garden sufficiently extensive, and were discussing the best method to employ for the release of the young captive, when a little jockey approached and

presented him with a letter. This contained an invitation to dinner on the same day. I thought he was jesting with me, or that some one was jesting with him; but he very soon convinced me of my mistake.— The person whose invitation he was about to accept, was a Receiver of Public Duties, whom an arrear of some 100,000 francs (for which amount his fortune, in good funds, offered tenfold security) had conducted to this place of safe-keeping, till an Inspector of the Treasury had examined and settled his accounts. Awaiting this event, our philosopher found means to spend a part of his income, and at once to charm and enliven his solitude with agreeable company. Eugene, who perceived that I had not listened with implicit faith to his story, proposed to present me to this Aristippus of prisons. I took him at his word, and we went to pay our respects to M. N——.

He occupied a lodging, consisting of two apartments on the first floor. Furniture in the best taste adorned this small abode, and

draperies, disposed with infinite grace and address about the windows, concealed the villanous-looking bars, which were the only things that could excite the disagreeable idea of a prison. In the first chamber we met some artists distinguished for their pleasing talents, two charming women, and many of those true friends who do not desert you even in your adversity, provided you continue to keep a good table. The dinner (to which I was invited with great politeness) was one of the most agreeable I ever remember. Among the party were prisoners accustomed to the best company, almost all men of wit, whose creditors are probably their butts; a matter which ought in great measure to reconcile the world to folly. I am sorry that my limits do not permit me to sketch some original characters, of which I had time to catch a few leading traits; and, among others, one in particular, a debtor, a prisoner from prudent foresight, who came to spend a *lustre* in gaol, to ensure the peaceful enjoyment of

an income of twenty thousand livres, which his creditors could not legally dispute with him at the period of his enlargement. After dinner we were entertained with music, till the hour when the bell gave the signal for strangers to retire. We took leave of M. N——, for whom I had conceived a good deal of esteem, and in whose case I felt much interested. Eugene conducted me as far as the grated door, where the scene of leave-taking, of which I was a witness, is every evening renewed. The wife, who had passed the day with her husband, the mistress, who had devoted an hour to her lover, the attorney, who had dined with his client, while he contrived with him the best measures for bringing his creditors to terms,—every body spoke at the same time, and it was impossible to hear any thing distinctly, but these words, repeated in chorus: *To-morrow!—I will see you!—You will come again!—You may rely upon me!*—Occupied in listening to the last remarks which my young companion was addressing to me,

I observed a wretched old man who applied for twenty-one sous, the amount of the alimentary allowance which his creditor was obliged to pay him while detained in prison. This poor mechanic, whose history Eugene recounted, was incarcerated for a sum of 240 francs, for which he had been responsible for one of his friends, who became bankrupt. After selling his furniture, he saw himself excluded from every other resource by the absurd obstinacy of an avaricious and foolish creditor, who preferred paying money for his maintenance in gaol, to providing him with the means of discharging his debt by his industry.

At last the bolts were moved, and all the strangers, with their permissions in their hands, were examined, and suffered to pass: the prisoners re-entered, we went out, and the gates were shut with a clashing sound upon them and upon us.

No. VI.—14th MARCH, 1813.

PARIS AT DIFFERENT HOURS.

—— Nil fuit unquam,
Tam dispar sibi.——

HOB. SAT.

Rien de plus variable et de plus bizarre.

Nothing was ever more unlike itself.

ONE of our most famous painters, who to that superiority of genius which is equal to the grandest compositions, unites a peculiar talent for that species of sketching, which

has been very aptly called the *epigram* of design, mentioned to me some days ago, a project he had formed for executing a series of caricatures after the manner of Hogarth, which should have for their object the development of some moral idea. A first draught which he shewed me, seemed to be as full of point as it was ingenious. In this series of little pictures, which it is intended to denominate *the Contrasts*, the artist proposes to represent the different classes of society in opposition to each other, so as to bring together those, who by their situation, their wants, their tastes, and their pleasures, form among themselves the most complete antitheses, and are consequently the most proper to place before our eyes in a lively manner, the customs, follies, faults, and qualities separately belonging to each.

Leaving him, I ruminated on the use which a moralist observer might make of a similar assemblage, considered in a more general way, and traced in more extended

proportions, and set about arranging this idea in my head as I passed along the Rue de Richelieu at three o'clock in the morning. Recollecting my age, and the season of the year, it might be asked what I was doing at so late, or so early an hour, alone and on foot in the streets of Paris? My answer would embrace a whole history, which would lead me too far from my subject; but which shall be preserved in another place hereafter.

When I reached the corner of the Rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs, I was stopped for a few moments by the concourse of the market carts, laden with vegetables for the Halle, and of carriages going to, or returning from the ball of the Opera. This contrast of pleasure and labour, corresponding in an activity common to the pursuit of objects so different, furnished a hint for arranging the reflections which occurred to me in a regular frame, and suggested the contemplation of this great city in the same manner that astronomers observe the

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planets, which they desire to know thoroughly, by watching their phases at different hours. Let us try then to catch the three principal aspects, of morning, noon and night.—

About three o'clock in the morning, Paris is at this time of the year (*Jours-gras** excepted) buried in a profound calm. The streets deserted and silent, here and there illuminated with the glimmering rays of the lamps which yet continue to burn, resemble the long galleries of a funeral monument. All are asleep, save the lovers and robbers who roam about in the dark, and sometimes encounter upon the same balcony.

What is this carriage doing at the door of a little hotel in the *Rue de Menars*? Let us see!—Within the purple curtains of a window on the first floor, I perceive a feeble light, and the shadow which moves

* *Jours-gras* are the last days of the Carnival.

upon the curtain, demonstrates the presence of a man awake. The coachman, waiting for his master, is walking up and down by the side of his vehicle, wrapt in a dread-nought, and apparently accustomed to these nocturnal promenades ; but the horses, servants less docile, beat the ground with impatient feet :—the door opens, a fat man comes out, leaning on the arm of a lacquey : I am at a loss to conjecture who this is, perhaps it is ***** . Scarcely has the carriage turned the corner of the street, when a young man, squatted on the angle of a great gate in front, leaps forward, and gives three taps at a low window. The door opens a second time, he enters, and a moment after I see two shadows instead of one upon the betraying curtain.—I pass on homeward, putting up a prayer, like a good christian, for the knaves and the dupes.

A few paces further on, I find myself before a fine looking hotel, lighted up as if for a fête. Many gentlemen's carriages

are ranged in the court, and a string of hackney coaches wait at the door. I examine those who come out: some are incensed with their servants, others speak to them with kindness: these laugh loudly as they call a coach, those mutter curses between their teeth as they walk away on foot. I heard them say that the mistress of this house does not do its honours in an equal way to all visitors, that she is blind and capricious; I ask her name; it is *Fortune*; I recognise her palace—it is *le Cercle des Etrangers*. While her favourites depart, their pockets filled with gold, the unlucky, with a lantern and a hooked iron in their hand, dispute the rags to the heaps of dirt which cover them, and search for some pieces of money in the gutter which runs bye.

It is four o'clock, and not yet day. Two shops are being opened; those of a baker and grocer; in the latter, a boy half asleep relumes the counter lamp, and prepares the flasks of peppermint and brandy, which

are to be sold in gills to the hackney coachmen returning to their habitations after watching all night in the service of balls; to workmen who follow the most toilsome and exhausting labours; and to some drunkards who have spent the night in the street, for want of ability to find the way to their lodgings. At the period they open the grocer's shop, the lottery office is shut; yesterday was the closing day—a transparent lamp has pointed it out through the night to persons who during the day might have forgotten this manner of placing, that is to say, of losing their money.

Day dawns, and little milk carts, and mules loaded with vegetables arrive in a row, and cross the enormous diligence which brays the pavement under its weight. Artificers resume their occupations, bustle re-animates every manufactory, and the noise of the anvil pursues to the very inmost apartment of his palace, the rich man who enters it, fatigued with the pleasures of the past night, and already a prey to the cares

of the morrow. All this motion, for the present concentrated in the most populous quarters, does not till several hours after, communicate itself to the site of the Palais-Royal, of the Chaussée d'Antin, and still more slowly to the faubourgs Saint-Germain and Saint-Honoré; but once put in action, with what prodigious activity do the industrious inhabitants of this region of luxury and ease, make up for the lost time? At eight o'clock the whole of the Rue Vivienne is in a state of tranquillity; at ten, a crowd innumerable agitate it, pressing and hurrying in every direction. Brokers come to receive the orders of their principals; *lads of the till* with their enormous bags over their shoulders, and great portfolio at their button-holes, commence their march to collect the receipts of the day. All the jockeys among the lawyers* are in the field, and make their way through a

* *De basoche.*

cloud of busy folks and clerks, who are plodding slowly towards their counting houses, and devising the means by which they may get most quickly away from them.

While mercantile speculations occupy at this hour, the awakened population of the right bank of the Seine; scientific labours are the chief employment of the people on its left bank. The pupils of the lycéums encumber the streets La Harpe and Saint-Jacques; the disciples of Hippocrates, with a Barthes or a Richeraud under their arm, direct their course towards the hospitals, for the purpose of joining example to precept; the gentry of the law, in gowns and robes, seek with hasty steps the den of chicane, turning over as they go, the leaves of a bundle of papers, to have at least the appearance of business; and last of all the learned scholars of the college of France proceed to improve their minds, and form their tastes in the school of Tissot and of Lacratelle.

If one wishes to enjoy a sight less uniform, and perhaps also less instructing, he may journey to the Palais-Royal. About three or four o'clock the courts are filled with a particular class of merchants, or rather of speculators, and the rotunda is invaded by the *Maroons*, who do that which they call their *business*; that is, they lend money on goods at five per cent. per month, or sell for a distant date merchandise of which they are not in possession. Returning by the Rue Vivienne, or by that of Richelieu, you will find the crowd cleared away; the pedestrians ambulate along by the shops, and leave the middle of the street for the brilliant equipages which stop at the doors of the principal warehouses; the young ladies descend to make their purchases, and expect you to believe that they are exceedingly surprised to find, there, young gentlemen of their acquaintance, whom chance has conducted to the same spot. If a ray of the sun brightens the morning, this swarm of glittering flies spreads to the

Tuilleries, or upon the road to the *Bois de Boulogne*, while the fashionables of the second order, the bachelors and idlers of the *Chaussée d'Antin*, seated on the *Boulevard de Coblentz*, wait patiently for the dinner hour, in looking at the dances of the little Savoyards.—These children of labour

* Qui de Savoie arrivent tous les ans,
Et dont la main légèrement essuie
Ces longs canaux engorgés par la suie,

gain from their daily toils not only the means of existence, but a fund of emolument, whence economy may save something to carry back to their families. Since a paternal administration has sprung up, if not to eradicate mendicity, at least greatly to diminish this evil, the little sweeps meet together on the boulevards, and in all the public walks where they discover to their profit the extent of the impost which

* Who came every year from Savoy to sweep chimneys.

professed beggars were in the habit of levying upon the public.

The hour of dinner recalls every person of the *bon ton* to Paris, and while the humble artisan, harassed and fatigued, returns to his family, and eats with an appetite, his sallad of potatoes, or morsel of bacon which frugality has enabled him to purchase, the happy of the day hurl in their coaches to invited dinners, where ennui renders insipid all the dishes which the ablest cooks have seasoned,—the parasites, in black-stockings, reach on tiptoe the house where they think there is a cover placed for them; and more than one adventurer, whose purse is drained, goes to ramble under the piazzas of the Palais-Royal in search of a friend, who will give them an invitation, or lend them money to pay for one of these excellent dinners at *thirty sous* a head, of which they are sometimes reduced to read, *fasting*, the numerous notices with which the pillars are papered.

To this period of bustle succeeds a calm, which is again destroyed at the hour for visiting the spectacles: all the coach entries are thrown open, and the carriages issue forth. The theatres and the coffee-houses are filled.

An hour after the playhouses are over the shops are shut; mechanics, citizens, people of business of every class, retire peacefully to their homes, and abandon the streets of Paris to a nocturnal population, whose manners cannot be observed except by those who watch them, and whom we shall leave in the darkness to which fear or shame confines them.

No. VII.—20th MARCH, 1813.

THE IMPERIAL LIBRARY.

Non desunt crassi quidem qui studiosos a libris deterreant.

ERASMUS.

Nous ne manquons pas d'ignorans qui cherchent à détourner les savans de l'étude.

We are not without persons of presuming ignorance, who would fain turn the studious from their books.

NATIONAL possesses this in common with individual character, that it is very often composed of good qualities or of

defects which it seems to exclude. Thus, for example the Parisians are reproached with being at once simpletons, and void of sensibility. Such house-keeper of the Rue Saint-Denis, as thinks he can never get too quickly to the parapet of a quay, to see a float of wood which descends the river ; passes, during forty years, twice or thrice under the fine triumphal arch of Blondel, without bestowing more attention upon it, than upon the Arcade of Colbert ; this honest man will attain, like another, his sixtieth year, without knowing more, than that there is in the quarter of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois a great stone building, which they call the *Louvre*, through the court of which, there is a passage which shortens the way to persons who are going from the Palais-Royal to the Rue de Thionville ; that at the *Tuileries* there is a grand garden, where one may walk gratis, for which reason he prefers it to Tivoli ; that the *Invalides* is distinguished among all the edifices in Paris,

by a dome which is covered all over with gilded lead ; but if you state in his presence, that the colonnade of the Louvre is an immortal monument of the genius of Perrault ; that the garden of the Tuileries is the source of the reputation of Le Notre ; that the interior of the dome of the Invalides, serves as a frame for the superb frescos of Lafosse, and presents the most beautiful effect of perspective which can be wrought by the art of the painter ;—if, I repeat, you offer before him any observations of this nature, our worthy citizen will prick up his ears, and every now and then cast a glance at his wife, to endeavour to read in her eyes whether she thinks you are amusing yourself at their expence.

Of all the public monuments of Paris, the most curious, the most interesting, and the least frequented by the immense majority of the population, is incontestibly, the Imperial Library :—that vast depot of human knowledge, that real tower of Babel, where the confusion of tongues prevails, but

in which nevertheless the noblest genius of every nation and age has raised itself to immortality. I am not astonished that such an establishment should only be habitually frequented by the studious, who come to imbibe from this inestimable fountain, the instruction which they could not elsewhere find; but I am always surprised that the sole attraction of curiosity should not occasionally draw to this spot, that crowd of unoccupied people for whom every thing in the capital is *a sight*.

The origin of the Imperial Library, the richest and most magnificent that ever existed, does not reach a date anterior to the fourteenth century: King John is supposed to have been its founder, and it then contained only fifty volumes. Charles V. his successor, who superadded a great love of literature to so many other royal virtues, augmented it rapidly to 910 volumes. He provided, that all his subjects might profit by this collection, and caused it to be deposited in one of the towers of the Louvre,

thence called *The Tower of the Library*, under the arched roof of which he ordered thirty little silver lamps to be suspended, so that the learned might pursue their inquiries at all hours, by day or night. The same library now contains three or four hundred thousand volumes; and it will be granted, that if the increase of knowledge is in the slightest degree in proportion to the increase of books, Science ought to have placed us at a greater distance than Time from the age of our ancestors. It is nevertheless very true, that if we were to reduce this immense collection to the small number of books which contain new ideas, useful views, and important truths; that if we were (to the great advantage of taste and good sense) to sell every volume of the ill-digested compilations, of the dogmatical commentaries, of the piles of controversies, of the counterfeits of plagiarists, of the enormous trash of romances, of the terrible mass of would-be-light poetry; it is true, I say, that if we sacrificed these productions,

we might deposit all the library in one of the galleries of the palace which it now fills; but there would be a little exaggeration in maintaining the opinion of my friend, a man of a very cynical nature, that if this purification were resorted to, the Library would not be a whit more voluminous than it was in the time of King John. Not to dwell however on its composition, in which it is obvious enough that the bad so greatly preponderates over the good, as to render it very desirable to exclude the former, if we had the means, still this library is one of those monuments which are a treasure and honour to France. Eighteen monarchs, and the greatest ministers in their different reigns, have devoted their utmost attention to its augmentation; but it was only in 1721 that it assumed a national grandeur and consistency, and was properly endowed in an establishment peculiar to itself, at the ancient *Hotel de Nevers*, afterwards the *Hotel de la Banque Royale*.

This vast edifice, which preserves a fine and tasteful style of architecture in its extreme simplicity, presents no exterior to the *Rue de Richelieu*, except high walls, pierced at considerable distances with plain windows, resembling the principal gate, and destitute of ornament of every kind. Viewed from the court, the appearance of the building, in the form of a parallelogram, is neither deficient in grandeur, nor even in that species of elegance which in architecture results from the general regularity and correspondence of the parts.

Persons who look for conformity in every thing, would remark that the bronze model of the Diana of Houdon, is not suited to the centre of this court, where we might expect to find some allegorical group of an order more severe. A fine staircase leads to the upper rooms, where the printed books and cabinet of medals are kept. We experience something of a religious awe on entering this sort of Pantheon, in which so

many altars are raised to unknown gods.— The most profound silence reigns under the learned roof; it is only broken by the footsteps of the attendants, who traverse the galleries to fetch the books which are asked for, and by the scientific rustling of the *folio* leaves, which ruffle the air as they are turned over by the finger of the reader.

The frequenters of the library are divided into two very distinct classes, the curious and the laborious. The first are easily known. They arrive about one o'clock, enter with a timid air, and seem fearful of making the floors, consecrated to study, creak under their feet. Their unsteady looks glance without stopping from shelf to shelf, filled with books, the bare titles of which it would take them many days to read. They hasten to reach the Eastern gallery, to see the two famous globes of Coronelli, the object of wonder to all country visitors, and the greatest merit of which (being at the same time their greatest incon-

venience) consists in being about thirty-five feet in circumference.

All the world knows that these globes are a monument of the admiration of the Cardinal d'Etrée for Louis XIV. The inscription on the celestial sphere bears:—*that all the stars of the firmament, and all the planets, are laid down in the position they occupied at the birth of this renowned Monarch**. The inscription on the terrestrial globe informs us that it was constructed to shew the countries in which so many great actions had been performed to the astonishment of nations which Louis might have reduced to subjection, had not his moderation prescribed limits to his valour†.

* Que “ toutes les étoiles du firmament et toutes les planètes y sont placées au lieu même où elles étoient à la naissance de ce fameux monarque.”

† “ Pour montrer les pays où tant de grandes actions ont été exécutées, à l'étonnement des nations que Louis eût pu soumettre, si la modération n'eût prescrit des bornes à sa valeur.”

The French Parnassus, by Titen du Tillet, participates with the globes of Coronelli in the respect and homage paid by provincial amateurs. This monument, of which the design appears to me to be mean, and the execution feeble, is at least placed very conveniently in one of the galleries belonging to this temple of the Muses.

The demeanour of the studious man, who uses the library habitually as his cabinet for pursuing the occupations of learning, is entirely different from that of the persons I have described. Economical of the time which he has it in his power to pass there, he is to be seen in the court at the moment the clock strikes ten. The doors are opened, he mounts the stairs with rapidity, runs across the rooms with the air of one acquainted with the localities, and speedily assumes his accustomed station in the gallery where the librarians sit. The plan of his operations is already digested; he does not hesitate about what book he has to ask for, and often goes to take it

himself from the shelf on which he deposited it yesterday. Seated near a table, upon which he arranges his papers, with his snuff-box open at his elbow, he reads, takes notes, and four whole hours elapse without his having ever raised his eyes to look around at those who are similarly occupied at the same table, or his having discovered that the temperature of the atmosphere is six degrees below zero in this place, where a spark of fire never yet penetrated.

There are here as in other places, and perhaps more here than are elsewhere to be found, originals to be noticed, and coxcombs to observe. What is that person doing all alone at yonder table, in the middle of twenty volumes marked with little slips of written paper,—that man in a light-coloured green coat, who wipes his brow as if he was toiling to excavate the earth or sawing marble? He is compiling, but with much greater ease than the Abbé Trublet: the latter infused the little wit which he possessed into that which he borrowed from

others; but the man in the green coat disburses nothing from his own capital—he trades only on the property of other people. Nobody can plunder with more unblushing impudence, and it might justly be said of him, that *he makes a havoc among good books*. He has published twenty volumes, in accomplishing which he has cut to pieces three or four hundred: and thus qualified he fiercely asserts his title to be considered a man of letters, and is a member of many learned societies.

If I set small value upon this literary manœuvre, I do not estimate one atom more highly that dusty commentator whose critical researches are directed solely to the maintenance of some very absurd paradoxes, by adding a multitude of quotations, which nobody would be at the trouble of verifying. He is at this moment, to the incalculable glory of learning, finishing a work in four volumes *quarto*, in which he proves that Montaigne is not the author of the *Essays*, and that the translation of Amyot is the

production of Jean de Mauneout. Between these two literary harpies, I observe a writer of ballads, who is engaged in quest of couplets among the enigmas in the old *Mercur*. A little further off is a lady romance writer, who is endeavouring to collect a fund of ideas, of situations, and of characters from Dufé and Scudéri, in order to mix them up together in new romances. At the other end of the table, I perceive two lads daily occupied, by order of their employers, in making extracts from Fréron, Linguet, and Desfontaines; which circumstance may probably account for the periodical re-appearance, as applied to such or such new tragedy or comedy, of particular touches of criticism which were originally levelled at *Mérope*, *la Métromanie*, and other equally distant productions.

I seldom visit the Library without going into the Cabinet of Medals. This magnificent collection, enriched by victory, is at this period the most complete in Europe. The love of order, and the learned research

of the Abbe Barthélemy, followed up by his laborious successors, leaves us nothing more to wish for in the methodical arrangement of so vast a number of medals and engraved stones, except a proof of the real utility, or even of the existence of this numismatical science, with which, I am afraid, we are yet only acquainted by name. I shall be ready to alter my opinion, whenever it shall be shewn to me that a single doubtful point in history has been elucidated by the help or study of medals, -during the two hundred years in which a class of our learned men have been exclusively occupied with this branch of archeology. On my last visit, at the moment I entered, two celebrated antiquarians were disputing upon a brass medal, the impression of which being effaced, left the field free for conjectures. One of them maintained that this medal belonged to the third year of the reign of Tiberius, the other held that it had been struck under the reign of Vespasian; a third *savant* unexpectedly dropped in.

and on reference to him, he pronounced that it was a *Spintrienne* medal, representing the amours of Pasiphæ. The debate waxed hot, when a citizen of Salamanca, who was by chance present, having cast his eyes upon the medal, declared that it was a *Spanish Marvedi*.

The apartment in which the manuscripts are deposited, inspires me with peculiar veneration. I never contemplate the numerous parchments with which it is surrounded, without imagining that they possibly envelope the fame of twenty men of genius, who want nothing but the application of a little good fortune, address, or patience, to lead to the discovery of the writing on which their immortality is founded. For a considerable period, a hope of this kind seemed to have taken possession of the world, if we might judge by the number of investigators whom we met in the manuscript room, and who grew pale in the examination of old parchments, from which, after six months labour, they

often gathered no other fruit than the exact knowledge of the era at which some convent of Capuchins was founded, or the date of the earliest privileges of some confraternity of Penitents.

I also generally look into the Cabinet of Prints when I go to the library. I there observe, round a large table covered with green cloth, young artists, who came to study the works of the great masters, and acquire ideas of new composition; and actors engaged to represent some grand personage upon the stage, who are consulting their portraits, in order to copy the costume, which our performers are no longer permitted to disregard, since one of our first tragedians has set the example of a most scrupulous attention to this necessary ingredient of scenic effect.

The last time I visited the Library, I asked a stranger who accompanied me what he thought most interesting. "The Keepers," he replied; "I have seen in the principal cities of Europe, vast collections of

books, of engravings, and of medals, distributed with great order, and arranged with the utmost care in superb galleries open to the public; but in Paris only have I observed men of superior merit, whom the love of letters attaches to all those who cultivate them, and whose indefatigable zeal welcomes, with a benevolence which never leaves them, every one who desires to have the benefit of their scientific assistance: I do not know," added he, "if one could find another establishment in the world, where the Bignon's, the Sallier's, the Sevin's, the Barthélemy's, have been succeeded by the Capronier's, the Van Praat's, the Dacier's, the Langles', and of which we might say, as we can of this, that the principals have always inherited the great talents of their predecessors.

No. VIII,—27th MARCH, 1813.

THE MONEY LENDERS.

Multis occulto crescit res fœnore.

HORACE, Ep. 1. l. 1.

Combien de gens s'enrichissent sourdement
par l'usure !

How many persons secretly grow rich by
usury !

ONE who has the character of knowing
better than any body else, the value, and
especially the interest of money, has re-
quested me to write an article against usu-

rers. This reminded me of Harpagon, who sought a celebrated preacher to beg him to preach a sermon on the same subject. "How much am I rejoiced, my brother," said the Christian orator, "to see that heaven has touched your heart, and that you are disposed to renounce."—"That is quite out of the question," interrupted the old Sinner; "if I pray you to thunder from the pulpit against usury, it is because there are in this city, so many little money lenders, who interfere in the trade, that a man like myself can gain nothing to make it worth his attention, and if you, by your sermons could reform *them*, my affairs would be much improved." This man had much too good an opinion of his brethren; it is not by the discourses of a preacher, or the labours of an essayist, that they can be reformed, but by the manners of the people, and the measures of the government. They cannot be corrected by fine sermons, but by good laws. In a great city the means of procuring money ought always to be in

proportion to the facilities afforded for spending it. A man has no sooner emptied his purse, than he must consider by what means he can fill it again, and there are always people to be found ready on certain conditions, to do him this double service. Nothing is more difficult in Paris, than for a man to regulate his wants (among which we must always include his pleasures) by his income. In the crowd of those who can never succeed in establishing this necessary equilibrium, the greater number, for want of credit to open an account with a banking house, are compelled to have recourse to means for raising money, not practised by those worthy merchants, those honest capitalists, who have no idea of lending, or of borrowing money at an annual interest, exceeding four or five per cent. On the other hand, however, as these gentlemen who revolt at the idea of usury, cannot think of placing out their money but on real property, on which they have the first mortgage, or on bills

endorsed with three good names, and payable at the bank of France, it has therefore become necessary for a long time, to tolerate bankers less scrupulous, who will step forward to the assistance of young persons of family, whose affairs are a little deranged; of persons from the country whose rents are not yet due; of advocates who are living on the expected *gains* of a law-suit; of gamesters certain of repairing their losses by a better calculated chance; of collateral heirs, eager to eat an inheritance, to which it is very doubtful they will ever succeed; of people who consider their debts for the most part, as matters unconnected with their revenues; of the unfortunate of all classes, to whom bankruptcy, sickness, or unforeseen reverses, have left no alternative;—in a word, of all those who have great desires, numerous wants, and small resources. All these different classes of borrowers have their analogies among the money lenders—the most rare of which are friends, whose purses are always open,

and who seldom fail to lose their friend with their money,—too happy if they are not requited with marked ingratitude. After this noble exception, which has nothing in common with the rule, comes the class of licensed money lenders, of whom we have little to say, either good or bad; and finally, the usurers who are modified in a thousand ways, who appear under twenty characters, and under twenty different descriptions, from the man of business (*faiseur d'affaires*) to the petty pawnbroker (*preteur a la petite Semaine.*) As a true painter of manners, who does not apply the eulogy or reproach to one epoch, which belongs to another, I ought to state, that within the last twelve or fifteen years the evils of usury have been considerably diminished. This happy result is caused by the re-establishment of "Mount Piety," an institution truly worthy of the name which it received from Pope Leo X., who is said to have been its founder. This branch of the Administration of benevolent In-

stitutions, which, at the present day is directed with equal economy and wisdom, is not the least benefit for which we are indebted to a paternal government, whose solicitude extends to every want of the poor. It is owing to the new organization of *Mount Piety*, that all the lombards* have disappeared; all those houses for lending money, not recognised by authority, where there was no guarantee for the security of property. It is a very moral and a very philanthropic idea, to appropriate to the support of hospitals, the produce of an establishment, the profits of which, in the first instance, flow from distress or from misconduct.

I should have been not a little embarrassed, had questions been put to me within the last fortnight, with respect to the establishment of *Mount Piety*, which I am now competent to answer.

The information so recently acquired, originated in the following circumstance:

* Pawnbrokers.

The father of a young student at law; whom I have already brought twice before my readers, sent to me lately, a duplicate (*une reconnaissance*) of Mount Piety, the first I remember to have seen, with a request that I would redeem the watch, in acknowledgment of which it had been given. The letter of my old friend informed me that this watch was an heir loom, precious for its antiquity, having within a century and a half passed from fob to fob, by inheritance, from his great grandfather to his son, by whom it had been pledged for a hundred and fifty francs a few days before he left Paris.

I attended at the place named in the ticket. A transparent lantern inscribed in large letters, "Commissioner of Mount Piety," directed me to the office where I had to transact the business on which I went. The entrance was not grand; an obscure passage conducted me to a narrow staircase, where a crowd of persons

ascending and descending the stairs, elbowed each other as they strove, with much embarrassment in their countenances, to escape the observation of their neighbours. I got forward slowly, so that I had time to ask myself, what could be the reasons which attached a sort of shame to an action so very innocent in itself as going to borrow on our own property, a sum demanded for a moment of exigency; and of answering the question—that it arose from the tacit avowal of poverty, which seemed to be made by resorting to such an expedient.

I entered the office where many persons were waiting for their turn, and took my place among them. Having seated myself in a corner, my spectacles on my nose, and my chin supported by my cane, I commenced my course of observations. The first thing I noticed, was a very distinctly marked difference, which divided the people around me into two classes. Some (these were the smallest number) had a

laughing air, spoke loud, and were out of patience at the slowness of the clerks, and looked at their neighbours with an expression of countenance, in which pity borrowed something from contempt: others with embarrassed looks, and humble demeanour, waited without, murmuring till their turn came; told their business in a low tone, signed their names with uneasiness, and gave their address with reluctance. It required little penetration to discover that the former came to reclaim, and the latter to pledge their effects.

The last days of the carnival were not over; the crowd to this house was considerable, and the office-keeper, who had engaged an extra clerk, had much difficulty to satisfy the multitude of borrowers who appeared. From some expressions which escaped him, I judged that the eves of festivals, and the drawing of the lottery, were for him and his colleagues days of extraordinary business, and that the demand for money for purposes of

amusement; was more common and more pressing in a great city, than the necessity for procuring it to meet the first wants of life.

I remarked a young *femme de chambre*, who came in the name of her mistress to pledge twelve chemises of cambric, of which the extreme fineness, gave one less the idea of any thing woven, than of a cloud or light vapour. The art of the most skilful sempstresses had been exhausted to adorn them, and to embroider them in different patterns. She wanted ten louis on these; they offered her four.—She desecanted on the smallness of the sum, and on the great value of the offered security; and wished to have at least one hundred and forty francs, which she said were indispensably necessary to her mistress for the purchase of a helmet-hat, which M^{lle}. Despaux would neither let her have on credit, nor sell at a lower price. This reason did not even make the office-keeper smile, and M^{lle}.

Marton was obliged to take from her neck, with some anger, a gold chain to complete the deposit, and obtain the sum which was indispensable.

After the *soubrette* came a fat woman, who asked for twelve francs on the counterpane of a bed. I was becoming deeply affected at the hard fate of this poor creature, whom I supposed to be reduced to the necessity of unfurnishing her own bed at the most rigorous season of the year, to solace an infirm husband, or administer to the wants of her sick children. Prompted by a feeling of humanity, I had already opened my purse with the intention of presenting her with the small sum, of which she appeared to stand in need, when I heard her make to a neighbour, an avowal of that which she herself called her *weakness*. Her daughter was invited for the following day to a superb masked ball, in the street *des Vieilles Audriettes*; and she wanted a dozen francs to hire a dress, that she might

go in character—her father would not give her the sum necessary, and she was therefore obliged to borrow it unknown to him. I was not perhaps so much touched as I ought to have been with this trait of maternal affection, and I returned my purse into my pocket, with more *sang froid* than I could boast when I pulled it out.

As this woman left the office, a young man entered precipitately, and without troubling himself too much to inquire if it was his turn or not, deposited on the table a very beautiful repeating watch, and demanded fifteen louis. They counted down the sum, and he went out without giving them his address, of which he said they would have little need, as he was going to the neighbouring gaming house, and would return in an hour to redeem it. The office-keeper appeared so little convinced of his punctuality, that he gave the watch to his clerk to be put with those deposits, which were to be sent on the following morning to the *Grand Bureau*.

An aged female of very respectable appearance, succeeded the gamester, and drew slowly from a large work-bag, a diamond cross, *a la Jeannett*, from which she seemed to part with much pain. While this jewel underwent the examination of the expert valuer, the good dame informed us that she had been ruined by a bankruptcy; that after having been five and thirty years house-keeper to the Duke of **** she had placed the fruits of her economy in a house, which was then thought very safe to the morning of the day on which it was discovered, that the principal was on his way to the United States of America, where he had realized his capital, leaving at Paris a house, of which the value was more than absorbed by the marriage portion of his wife, who had brought him nothing but debts. The old lady had sold in succession all her moveables; she had nothing left but the cross she had brought, which her dying mistress had left to her by will, and which

she now sought to pledge, to procure an admission into the Housewives' Hospital, "*Hospice des Ménages*." Men are naturally good; the fifteen or twenty persons who heard the history of this poor woman, listened to it with great interest, and by chance it so happened, that there were those present, who were able to lend her the money she wanted, and to leave her valued pledge in her own keeping.

My turn came; I presented my duplicate. They desired me to return on the morrow. I inquired the cause of the delay, of which I had seen no other example: they informed me, that the object reclaimed by me, must be returned to them from the *Grand Bureau*, or I might go there myself for it, taking the *grand duplicate*. This offered me an opportunity of seeing an establishment, of which as yet, I knew only one of the appendages. I went through the usual formalities, and took my way to the street des "*Blancs-Manteaux*," where the

administration of Mount Piety has established its seat and general magazine.

The grandeur of the building; its vast offices, the activity and bustle there observable, give at first sight an idea of the importance of such an establishment. Great store-rooms occupy all the first story, and the pledges of every sort are there arranged in admirable order. An immense hall, so constructed as to avoid all disorder and confusion, is open to the crowd of borrowers, who, with their bundles under their arms, sometimes wait a whole day before the number which they receive on entering, is called over. It is not uncommon to see two or three hundred persons assembled in this hall; most of them belonging to the lower classes of society, as the chief office seldom receives at first hand, laces, jewels, shawls; the gew-gaws of luxury, those ruinous superfluities, which possess no value any where, but among the persons who use them. It is by means of

agents, that people of that sort communicate with the office, and it is to the discretion of these go-betweens, that extravagance, dissipation, and vanity, confide the secret of their necessities.

The number which had fallen to my lot, afforded me no hope of being despatched with the family watch before the close of the day ; I therefore gave up my pursuit and resolved to return another day at better time. A clerk who saw me quitting the place, begged me not to take the trouble of calling on a Saturday, a day on which a multitude thronged the office to obtain money for the pleasures of the following day ; and with equal care to avoid the Monday, a day, which the same people devote to replace by fresh pledges, the foolish waste of the day before. This observation, which I had already heard in other words at the commissioners, might well become the foundation for some very serious reflections, but those who are interested in them, have

already considered the evil, and those who are not, would hardly lose their time in the perusal.

No. IX.—3d. APRIL, 1813.

HISTORY OF A JOCKEY.

In veterem fato revoluta figuram.

VIRG.

Rendu par le hasard à sa forme première.

Women of the least virtue, make the best of
prudes.

WARTON.

BEFORE you were born, my dear readers,
(or at least, the greater portion of you), I
used sometimes to pass my evenings at the

house of Mademoiselle Arnould, who was at that time in the bloom of beauty, and the zenith of her talent. A most fascinating party regularly assembled there twice a week—God rest their souls in the other world, where by this time they are nearly all re-united. Geliotte was among the number of these agreeable companions, and I recollect he used often to speak of an actor, who, in the course of his theatrical career, had successively played in the same Opera (*Les Têtes de l'Olympe*) the character of Cupid, of Mars, of Jupiter, of Charon, and of Saturn. It is the same in every situation of life, where, without quitting their original sphere of action, men change their employments in proportion as they advance in years. Thus, a little boy, whom in my youth, I remember to have seen as a jockey, after being in succession a groom, a lacquer, and a valet de chambre, is at this day a porter in the same hotel. He commenced his life in the stable; he is finishing it in the lodge. Thus far, there is nothing very ex-

traordinary, but if by chance he had been born under a splendid canopy on the first floor, upon one of those antique beds, fashioned by the hand of Jacob, and which might be taken for the bark of Cleopatra, could one help feeling surprise at finding him in the mansion of his birth, clothed in a little blue vest with red shoulder knots, and an English jockey cap on his head? A wonder of this kind belongs to the number of those which I have experienced in the course of my life.

Some ten or twelve years ago, returning with a party from the chace, I was conducted to the Chateau de ———, the residence of a very young married lady, who will not be known by others, though she may recognise herself under the name of *Merange*, which I shall give her here, and which has no reference to her real name. It were no easy task to find a prettier woman than she was then, or indeed than she is now. The charms which grace and beauty spread around her, could not long conceal

from a man of my age and observation, that with much address, she absolutely wanted sense, and that under a deportment reserved even to prudery, she concealed a wanton heart, lively passions, and equivocal conduct.

Among the domestics in this opulent mansion, there was a Jockey at most ten or eleven years old, of a person more remarkable than handsome, for whom M. de Merange, though otherwise an excellent master, evinced a feeling of antipathy, the more extraordinary as this boy appeared to possess qualities superior to his age and station. He was attached to the personal service of an old lady, who said she had brought him from England, and who in proof of this, called him *James*, by which name this boy was commonly known. I know not with what intention, or through what absence of mind it occurred, but one morning while at breakfast, my eyes wandered alternatively from Madame Merange to the jockey, and from the jockey to Ma-

dame Merange. She caught my glance on its passage, and I thought I could discover, in spite of the precaution she took to conceal it with her hand, that a blush unusually deep suffused her pretty face. The evening before, I had innocently questioned one of the maids about the relations of little *James*; and the only answer I obtained was a malicious smile. These circumstances excited strange suspicions in my mind, which however were presently effaced, and effaced the sooner, as I had no interest in their confirmation.

One day last month, on leaving the baths of Tivoli, a young man apparently sixteen, or seventeen years of age accosted me, and desired my services to help him to a place. It was necessary for him to name Madame Merange before I could recognize in him, the little jockey I had seen eight years before at the Chateau de ————. I was quite willing to render him any assistance in my power; but in the first instance desired to know for what reasons he had quitted his

former mistress, as also what had since befallen him. I gave him my address, and directed him to come to me on the following morning. He was exact in keeping the appointment. Several certificates, of which he was the bearer, and which he desired me to read, bore testimony to his good conduct, but none explained the reasons which had so often compelled him to change his situation. I wished to be fully informed to what this was to be ascribed, and as he expressed himself in good terms, and with much ease, I called upon him to recount his history:—the adventures of a Jockey might besides furnish some of those observations on manners, for which one is frequently compelled to trust to the eyes of others.—I shall here let him speak for himself.

“Some weeks after you had quitted the Chateau, Madame Dobson, (the old lady mentioned before) called me one morning, and informed me from my master, that I must seek my fortune elsewhere. This

compliment did not astonish me; I had been prepared for it a long time, and the aversion which my master had conceived against me, caused me to feel my dismissal less sensibly. I asked to see my mistress; this favour was however denied me, but they gave me from her, a little portmanteau, tolerably well furnished, a leathern purse containing fifteen louis in gold, the whole being accompanied with an express prohibition, from ever again appearing before those whom I was now about to quit. I left this house, in which I had lived from my earliest years, without regretting a single person, though I trust my heart is not deficient in feeling. The only friend, the only acquaintance I had upon earth, was a poor countrywoman, who came to see me two or three times a year at the Chateau, who called me from kindness her son. I should have directed my steps towards her abode, but I knew not where she lived, and they refused to tell me. Thus circumstanced, I set out for Paris, and chance.

ordered it so, that I should meet in the carriage, in which I took a place, an officer who offered to engage me to attend him in Spain, and the next day I was with him and his lady on the way to Madrid. He left her in that city with an old and trusty servant, and taking me with him, hastened to join the army, which was advancing from the side of Toledo. His evil star, or rather mine, decreed that this brave man who had already become much attached to me, should lose his life at Val de Penas. I returned to Madrid to carry these sad tidings to his wife, who, retaining me in her service, set out immediately for France. I should probably have been with her still, if my inconsolable mistress had not met with the Captain of an American vessel at Bourdeaux, who found means to persuade her, that the best remedy for sorrow, was travelling. She resolved to make a voyage with him to New York, and as the Captain perceived that my presence perpetually recalled to the memory of the amiable widow, the loss she

had sustained, he judged it expedient to set sail without me.

I was again fortunate enough to find a master, some days after, in a young *Bordelais* heir, who was about to proceed to Paris to be put in possession of a rich inheritance. He conceived that a Parisian Jockey would give a certain eclat to his entrée into the capital. We set off, and had no sooner reached Paris, than my master was put in possession of his real estates, which he transformed very promptly into a disposeable capital of 230,000 francs, and with the assistance of some male and female friends, as well as of tavern-keepers, tailors, gaming houses, and horse dealers, got rid of it in less than three years. The first retrenchment he thought of making, took place in his stable. From that time I considered him a lost man, and judged it was time for me to make an honourable retreat. To his horses he owed much of his importance—he no sooner appeared on foot, than doubts arose as to the situation of his affairs. The

alarm spread far and wide among his creditors, and those who would never have arrested him in his carriage, or on horseback, felt no difficulty in making so free with a pedestrian, as to execute the warrant for his caption, of which they were the bearers.

With the cabriolet, and last horse of M. de Flavignac, who left me in possession of his livery for the payment of my wages, I passed into the service of a man, who let out carriages to hire. My smart jacket of sky blue, my scarlet collar trimmed with silver lace, and my buckskin small-clothes, gave me the air of a Jockey belonging to a great house; and I was very successful in my new condition. If a party was made for Ranelagh, for Mouceaux, for Rincy, little James was always the driver in request, and if ever I write my memoirs, this part of my life will neither be the least scandalous nor the least amusing.

I nevertheless soon tired of this unsettled life, and engaged myself to a celebrated stock jobber, who established his household

upon a grand scale. My occupations were entirely changed; my master spent the morning at Tortonis, where he transacted business while eating shell-fish with champignons, speculating upon the rise and fall of the funds, and playing at billiards. From two till five o'clock I went, according to his orders, and waited with the cabriolet, in the court of the Palais-Royal, to make it be believed that he was to be found regularly upon 'Change. The consequence of this course of operations was, that he one fine day was taken up by a post chaise at the door of the coffee-house where he kept his office, having charged me with the task of treating with his creditors, and informing them that they might take possession of his house, which he had abandoned to them, all furnished, as it stood.

One of the syndicks appointed to receive my accounts, which, as you may believe, were very soon made up, appropriated the cabriolet to himself, at the request of his wife, who also desired that I might be

transferred as a part of the equipage. I relinquished my little jacket, to put on a great coat with a large cape, and for many months had nothing else to do but to drive my mistress from her house in the Rue-Neuve-des-Petits-Champs, to the Ecole-Militaire, where she had a cousin, a lieutenant of hussars, who had been wounded, and in whose recovery she took the most lively interest. Her husband, possessed of much less feeling, formed an unfavourable opinion of an anxiety so natural; and in order to suppress the visits, devised no better scheme than to suppress the cabriolet.

On leaving this house, I entered into the service of a man who fills a station, to which no name has yet been given, but which is not on that account the less useful and lucrative. This master, whom I must quit to save myself from being starved to death, an event, which in the way he feeds me cannot be long delayed) is the mysterious intendant, the confident adviser of all the women, *comme il faut*, in the capital,

who have secret business to transact of whatever nature it may be. His cabriolet, behind which, to tell the simple truth, I am a fixed post, does not rest two hours in the day; we run incessantly from the faubourg Saint-Germain to the Chaussée-d'Antin, from the Chaussée-d'Antin to the faubourg Saint-Honoré, and I do not think that there is an accoucheur in Paris, whose bell is troubled oftener than ours. Such, Sir, is my present condition, to escape from which, I beg your assistance."

While listening to this young man, whose figure and tone of voice renewed the ancient suspicions in my mind, I fell into a profound reverie. I took his address however, and promised him that he should shortly hear from me. My first measure, had for its object, to discover the abode of the countrywoman, of whom James had spoken, and who came to see him sometimes at the *Chateau de *****. I learned that she lived at Brévane. Thither I went, and obtained from this person incontestable proof

that poor James, whom she had suckled, was the son of Madame de Merange, and that he had the misfortune to be born during an absence of two years from his wife of the husband of his mother. Well provided with all the memorials which the nurse could procure for me, (of which the most important informed me of the name of James' father, whom I formerly knew, and who died a year after the birth of this child) I waited upon Madame de Merange at a time when her husband was from home. I explained to her the cause of my visit, and endeavoured to revive the feelings of nature, by shewing her that it was possible to reconcile their indulgence with the duties of a wife, and the preservation of a character. Thinking me less instructed than I really was, she at first assumed the tone of insulted virtue; but when I mentioned the names of the nurse and father of the boy, and told her that I held in my hands the written proofs of the facts, with which, her son, with my advice

might one day arm himself against her, the lady put an end to this conversation, more painful to her self-love than to her sensibility, by requesting permission to send to me a confidential man, whom she would authorize to settle *this disagreeable affair*.

Next day, I was visited by a person of fine spirit, very delicate, and one who seemed to be well versed in matters of this kind. "I do not meddle with affairs of gallantry," said he, "but when they threaten a discovery; and, thank heaven, I never have any thing to say to love, till it begins to listen to reason." Madame de Merange, he continued, "belongs to that small number of women, who, upon this point, entertain the most correct notions, and whose passions do not affect their judgment. She soon perceived that to be happy during life, a woman has need of great consideration; that happiness may be more certainly obtained by clever management, than by conduct free from reproach, and that there is not the slightest degree of difference between

concealment and modesty." After the avowal of these principles, I thought it unnecessary to treat the matter with any other arguments than such as might have an effect upon people influenced by similar morals, and at the end of a long debate, I obtained for my *Protégé*, a pension of two thousand francs secured upon the estate. Nothing remained to be done, except to go to the notary and execute the deed, for which purpose it was requisite that the young man should be present. My servant was not in the way; the lady's agent, whose cabriolet was in my court, offered to send his *jockey* for the person whom we wanted: he was called, he came up; and imagine our surprise, when we found that this *jockey* was no other being than James himself, who was no less astonished than we were, when informed of the change about to take place in his condition. Without being acquainted with the source of his little fortune, he has already shewn himself worthy of the advantage, by the use

which he makes of it, and by the eagerness he has displayed so to employ it, as to be enabled even to distinguish himself in an honourable profession.

No. X.—10th APRIL, 1813.

THE FLOWER-MARKET.

..... Animum picturâ pascit inani.

VIRG. *Æn.* I. V. 466.

..... Ils se contentent d'un vain simulacre.

Pleased themselves with a foolish fancy.

WOMEN have good cause to be headstrong in the country in which we live, for they know nothing, and are never taught what they ought to know. Alas! to the endless satires upon the frivolity of their tastes, during the minority of Louis XIV., have

they essayed a higher flight, and devoted themselves to the study of the sciences and literature? Moliere set the example of decrying them as *learned ladies!* as *Blue-Stockings** of the *Hotel Rambouillet*. To surmount this ridicule, have they endeavoured to combine different pursuits, to transform their boudoirs into cabinets, to appear at the levees of ministers? Their cares have been described as plots, and their reputation for intrigue has been every-where confirmed. At the period when I made my appearance in this world, women had given into a mixed course, which at least established a sort of balance between those who censured and those who panegyricized them. They mingled fondness for dress with attention to science; they frequented the Queen's court and the King's garden; they attend a lecture of Le Sage in the morning, and a masked ball in the evening;

* *Precieuses.*

they canvassed for a place at an Academic Sitting with the same eagerness as a box for a first appearance of *Nicolet*. At an epoch more recent to the date at which I write, our ladies rendezvoused at the Atheneum and the College de France. I have witnessed their enthusiasm for experimental philosophy, and seen them assemble at Mitouards to make experiments on gases: the most learned were anxious to turn the properties of chemistry to their use; the phenomena of electricity and animal magnetism, by means of which ladies were enabled to explain to their husbands the cause of their vapours and the disorders of their nervous system, next attracted their attention, and only gave way to the passion for botany, which J. J. Rousseau had the good fortune to develop in their nature. A chapter of *Emilius* made the *perriwinkle** all the fashion! Not a woman but had

* *La Pervenche*, a plant with leaves resembling a laurel, but smaller.

upon the chimney of her bed-room a plant of this kind, in a Sevres vase of a peculiar shape, on which was to be seen the portrait of the Philosopher of Geneva.

This mania was carried to such a pitch, that a nurseryman of Montreuil accumulated from that source the brilliant fortune with which he scandalized Paris for forty years. Since however the mind, like the heart of woman, must after all enjoy some exclusive taste, the study of plants and flowers is one which may be pursued with propriety. The botany of boudoirs is an *inoffensive* science, and the luxury of flowers is more agreeable and less ruinous than that of bronzes and china. I am more pleased to see upon a chimney vases of jassmines and roses, the bloom of which charms the eye while their perfume delights the sense, than urns of alabaster without meaning and without use. Gardeners decorate a saloon much better than gaming tables, and stands of orange, laurel, and myrtle, ranged on a balcony, form

a verdant curtain, which hides more agreeably than silk the black wall of a butcher, which the finest habitations are sometimes doomed to have situated within the range of their perspective.

The taste for flowers is not confined to one sex or to any particular class; it is now general. The gilded saloons of the *Chaussée-d'Antin* are almost green-houses for the collection of plants and shrubs of the highest price: the shops of the merchants in the city are decorated with boxes of pomegranates and myrtles: the work-shop of the artisan in the *faubourg* cannot do without some pots of rosemary and sweet-basil; and the cultivation of monkshood is the most important business of the little lodger in the *Marais*. To him alone belongs the task of rearing at his window the arbour-work and brass wire bent into arches, round which twines and displays itself in a manner so picturesque that plant, whose verdure adorns his dwelling, and whose purple flowers em-

bellish so finely the sallad with which he every Sunday treats his family.

Among the French it rarely happens that a taste for any thing is not carried to such an extent as to become a folly; such is that rage for foreign plants, on which it is impossible even for ridicule to do justice.—There is not the poorest proprietor of the smallest country-house, but must have his green-house and his collection of *exotics*, and who does not set apart for this purpose a low apartment, heated by the tunnel of the eating-room stove, where he gets together, at great expence, a parcel of vegetables which he cannot raise, and the names of which he with the utmost difficulty remembers. His basin of six feet in diameter is filled with rushes, which he calls his *acquatick* plants, two borders are reserved for the *lillyaceous* tribe; an alley to the north, one side of which is formed by a wall, contains his *hepaticas*, and to complete the caricature, tickets of tin stuck into the earth

in the kitchen-garden designate *cibol* and *parsley*, under the appellations of *cepa fissilis* and *petroselinum*.

This botanical rage has multiplied the race of gardeners and nurserymen in the faubourgs of Paris, where able cultivators settle, and on a few acres of land rear the shrubs and plants of every climate. These vast magazines of vegetation supply the flower-market.

This market, the least useful and the most agreeable of all others, in virtue of this double title, enjoys the sole privilege of being frequented by the opulent class. All the female sex, without excepting those of the highest rank, come here themselves to make their purchases. This vegetable fair was held in former times on the *Quay de la Ferraille*, where good order was no less aggrieved than good taste, by seeing stalls of old iron and stalls covered with vases of flowers jumbled together, and by meeting recruiting-parties when you were looking for nosegay-girls. Among the number of

improvements, of embellishments of every kind which have been carried into effect within the last twelve years, the flower-market has not been forgotten. The extent of the Quay *de l'Horloge* had been for a long period confined by a pile of houses, the most modern of which perhaps was erected in the twelfth century. These unseemly and paltry buildings and those of the Pont Saint-Michel, were the only remains of barbarism still visible in this capital, which is the admiration of Europe for the splendour of its edifices; a few months was sufficient for their disappearance.— These ruins made way for a superb quay, crowned with the name of a hero. It is there, upon the Quay *Desaix*, in the centre of a spacious area, bordered with trees and decorated with two fountains, that the flower-market (of which a very imperfect idea will be formed, if visited on any day but Saturday) is now established. At day-break the carts of the nursery men arrive in long files, and direct their course towards

the southern side of the Pont-au-Change. There they deposit those pots filled with decayed bark and chalk, in which the most sickly plants acquire an appearance of freshness and vigour well calculated to seduce purchasers, who are not aware, that in less than eight days, the object of their choice, destroyed by a forced increase of vegetation, will become withered to the very stalk, and perish. In this place, as in every other, there are a variety of ranks and distinctions, which are not easy to be accounted for on the score of reason, utility, or merit. Noble flowers, separated from the vulgar, flourish on stands set apart for them, and are not more remarkable for that circumstance than for their scientific name inscribed upon the pot where they grow.

Every succeeding year robs one flower of the fashion which it bestows upon another. Each experiences in turn the *Hortensian* fate, and after having formed the delight of the boudoir and honour of the saloon, is reduced to deck the stall of

the sausage-vender or the window of the sempstress. The disgrace of the superb *Datara Arborea* is not the least striking of these reverses: we have seen it for some time decorate the peristyles of palaces and the vestibules and staircases of noble houses; banished from these places by the *Mode*, and excluded even by its qualities from that asylum which, with a growth less majestic and a perfume less powerful, it might have found in the abodes of the middle class, it has been condemned to vegetate at the bottom of the orangery, or in the corner of the court-yard. A moral might be extracted from this subject.

The earlier part of the morning is devoted to the sale of common flowers. The baskets of the sellers are only filled with lilies, roses, pots of reseda and of gilly-flower, which are destined to replace upon the chimneys and stands of the citizens of Paris, the blue-glass bottles in which, with the help of water and time, they had reared some stalks of narcissus, and hyacinths, equally wretched in form and colour.

About noon however the Flower-Market shines in full splendour. At that period it is visited by the most elegant women in charming undress, where the art of the toilet is concealed under the veil of simplicity. A hat of Italian straw adorned with a bouquet of violets, a robe of silk, tan-coloured kid buskins, a yellow or blue shawl thrown over the left arm; such is the sort of uniform which our fair sex appear to have adopted for their lounge to the Flower-Market. The horses are yoked to the calash; and the coachman and footman, in plain riding-coats, give the equipage that air of negligence which the *bon ton* demands. The lady seats herself in the carriage accompanied by her most intimate friend; they traverse Paris, admiring the works of the Louvre, the quays, the obelisk on the Pont-neuf, and are astonished at their being unacquainted with a quarter through which they drive in the night-time once or twice a week in going to the *Bouffons*.

The carriage stops at the end of the Pont-au-Change, and takes its station in the file of those which have already drawn up. They enter the market, and the first person they meet with an appearance of the utmost surprise, is almost always the person whom they would have been extremely surprised not to have met.

As for me, I march from stand to stand, and endeavour from my observation on persons and the flowers they buy, to divine the use to which they intend to put them.

There, a very young and very pretty girl, under the conduct of her governess, is purchasing two little orange trees. She measures the size of the tubs in which they grow with a ribbon. I would wager that she is preparing for the birth-day of a grand-papa, and is desirous of ascertaining whether these boxes are not too large for the window of the chamber where she wishes them to be placed.

Here, there is a lady buying an enormous

laurel-rose*, which she may lay at the feet of an immortal. It seems to me that this compliment is intended for some dramatic poet, who will not fail to see in it the triple emblem of his immortality, his glory, and his love.

At a distance more remote, I observe a little man, pale, shrivelled, and thin, whose body is supported on two limbs the most frail with which mortal man was ever provided. He has cleared the market of its finest flowers. To learn their destination, I did not care to listen to the address which he gave to three of the porters, to whom he entrusted these treasures of the spring; but there is nothing of envy in my calling on him to remember, that if there are flowers for every season, there are follies which are *not* suited for every age!

I am still laughing at the surprise of an honest citizen, who priced a white rose

* An evergreen, the foliage of which resembles the laurel, and its flowers roses.

which he wanted, as he said, to present to his wife on her birth-day, and for which they asked eighteen francs. He exclaimed aloud at this demand, "And that other?" said he, pointing with his finger to a second plant. "Two thousand six hundred livres," replied the florist. The citizen, who thought they were mocking him, fell into a passion, and accused the merchant of insolence; the latter retorted, and called him fool; the quarrel became furious, and I do not know how it might have terminated, if I had not taken the trouble to explain to this worthy Parisian, that what he mistook for white roses was the double-flowered *Kamelia Japonica*, for which an individual had within the last two years paid four thousand guineas in England*. To complete his conviction on this head, a lady whom I should recognise by her queen-like

* The follies of England never escape from French pens without a due portion of exaggeration.—Tr.

demeanour, gestures, and voice, bought the precious shrub at the price asked by the gardener, and had it carried in triumph to her carriage by a servant, who made his way with difficulty through the crowd of gazers, impressed with admiration of a plant so dear.

Before leaving the Flower-Market, I wished to complete a collection of tulip bulbs, which I had a commission to purchase; but the nurseryman to whom I addressed myself, referred me to the celebrated Tripet, to that prince of the lilyaceous tribe, whose garden in the grand alley of Chaillot, is at this time the resort of all the true amateurs, who may there behold three thousand seven hundred and thirty-seven sorts of tulips, and of bulbs of every kind.

No. XI.—1st MAY, 1813.

THE MORNING OCCUPATIONS OF A
PRETTY WOMAN.

Formosis levitas semper amica fuit.

PROPER. Eleg. 13. lib. 2.

La légèreté a toujours été l'apanage d'une
jolie femme.

Levity has always been the appendage of a
pretty woman.

I EVERY day hear complaints of old age,
yet see every one anxious to arrive at it.
This my brother mortals is one of your con-

traditions. The same cause produces two different effects; you love life, and you dread old age, which announces its termination; you are on the road, you know the end of your journey, and for this reason you wish to take the longest way. The wisest plan would be to make an arrangement with the seasons of life, similar to that which we make to accommodate ourselves to the varying seasons of the year, and only to bear in mind the inconveniencies of the period we are quitting, and the pleasures of that upon which we are about to enter. When we grow old, we should consider that we have an advantage over young people to the extent of the difference of years by which we are separated from them, since it is certain that the old man has lived over such a period, but doubtful whether this will ever be accomplished by the young man. It should be a study to learn to grow old. This art we should labour to acquire on pain of being one day insupportable or ridiculous—insupportable, if following the ex-

ample of Valmont and ceaselessly meditating on pleasures, which we can taste no more, we annoy others, with our regret, our chagrin, and our privations; ridiculous, if by a course more peculiar to the age in which we live, we are, like Dercourt, seized with the mania of attempting to cling to youth, and excite risibility by the unavailing struggles we maintain against Time, who advances to drag us away. I do not intend to write after the manner of Cicero, an essay on old age, but I will proclaim it as a precept supported by long experience, that to be content in this stage of life, we must not arrive at it all at once. I have wished to prepare myself some time in advance, as I have in autumn been accustomed to get measured for my winter clothes, that I might not be too sensibly affected by the rigours of the season. I have succeeded so well in making myself ready for the anticipated change, that I have thoroughly satisfied myself, that a corner by my own fire-side at ten o'clock at night, is

worth as much as a masked ball; that a chapter of Montaigne, is better than a race in the wood of Boulogne; and that, taken all together, the pleasures of friendship, may well console one, for the more ardent, but less durable favours of love. I am also tempted to bring into the account, (for at my time of life one should leave nothing out), a privilege which I enjoy without being vain of it, that of being admitted at all hours, and in all places, to the society of the youngest and prettiest women, without awaking the suspicion of a husband, or the jealousy of a lover. I have seen the day when I should have called a *tete-a-tete*, "*une bonne fortune*;" but now the *boudoir* is opened to me as freely as the saloon. The ladies have no longer any secrets to hide from me; I am not however, the dupe of a frankness which informs me they have no longer any interest to deceive me; but without flattery, I do not see that they often gain by appearing other than what they really are. With some exceptions,

the mysterious veil in which they envelope themselves, conceals more of their attractions than of their imperfections, more good qualities than defects. This observation is peculiarly applicable to Madame Amelia de Corneil.

I breakfasted some days since, *tete-a-tete* with this young lady, who boasts in the number of her advantages, youth, a charming figure, and a yearly income of twenty-four thousand livres. She inquired of me how I employed my time, and appeared disposed to envy the happiness, of which I bragged a little: "It is not," said I, "with my pleasures as with your's—for me, those are the most delicious, on which the sun shines; but perhaps even you would be pleased with what I enjoy, when I go to breakfast at eight in the morning, once or twice a week in the early part of spring, in the Swiss dairy, of the '*Jardin des plantes*,' and take my milk and eggs under the shade of the old cedar of Lebanon, which covers the tomb of Daubenton." Every thing

that offers to a woman the charm of novelty, is sure to captivate her attention. The beautiful Amelia made me promise to take her some morning at the hour I had named, to breakfast under Daubenton's cedar. "*At eight o'clock?*" said I,—"*think well of it, at eight o'clock?*"—"I will not make you wait five minutes." The thing was settled for one day that week.—I was punctual to the time named for the rendezvous, but a horrible headache had prevented her closing her eyes all that night, and she had but just gone to sleep—the next morning, she expected Madame Constant at ten—the next, an aid-de-camp was setting off to join the army, and was to call to take charge of some letters she wished to get forwarded; the next was the day on which M. Constantini, the Italian master came, and she would not fail to be in the way to receive him for all the world. Thus, from morning to morning, and by excuse after excuse, the breakfast party was put off, till at length, patient as I am

with the ladies, I began to grow weary: I however, accepted a new appointment for Tuesday morning, on the express condition, that I would not hear of being again put off, but should proceed strait to her chamber.

I made my appearance at the time agreed upon; masters and servants, every body but the people employed to clean the house, were as yet, asleep. I went boldly to the chamber where Madame slept; I opened the blinds, and by singing the air,* "Awake fair Sleeper," I recalled to her memory the conditions for which I had stipulated the evening before. "Your mercy, my good hermit," she exclaimed, opening the curtains of her bed, and extending an arm of dazzling whiteness—"excuse me yet again for this one day."—"No, Madam—Oh no, for this once you must keep your word with me."—"I will to-morrow without fail."—"As you have hitherto done."—"If you knew how much

* Réveillez-vous, belle endormie.

I have to do.”—“ But what am I to do, Madame, who intended to make our breakfast in the ‘ *Jardin des plantes*,’ the subject of my Saturday’s paper?”—“ Take another text.”—“ One of your morning’s for instance.”—“ You laugh at me, but that would be worth more than some of your grave dissertations.”—“ Be it so—but it would be necessary that I should have time to think of it—to take notes to find a way of putting them together.”—“ Does that embarrass you? Well, I have a proposition to make.—It is impossible for me to go out this morning, but I do not wish that you should lose time by coming to me. Go and pass an hour in my library; I will rise; we will breakfast together, and I will dictate your article.”—“ I take you at your word.” Madame de Cormeil then rung for her servants—I left the room, and went to the library to wait till she recalled me I took down a volume of Voltaire, and had scarcely read half of it, when a valet

de chambre came to tell me, that Madame wished to see me in her boudoir.

It is a very pretty thing to see a woman twenty :—

“ ————— Dans le simple appareil,
D'une beauté qu'on d'arracher au sommeil!”

“ In the simple attire of a beauty just snatched from slumber.”

I am free to confess that I felt much pleasure in contemplating this figure of Heba, so fresh, so gracious—those flaxen locks which played on her forehead in such lovely disorder—that robe half open, through which one might fancy they saw, to use the language of Ossian; “ The sweet star of night half issuing from between the clouds.”

“ There is the pen and the paper; get ready,” said she—“ I will dictate;—you write. The subject shall be—my yesterday morning's occupations.” I am ready, said I, “ *The Morning of a pretty Woman,*” I will mix nothing else with the title.

“ I had read *Mademoiselle de la Fayette* till three o'clock in the morning ; my head full of Louis XIII., Cardinal Richelieu, Madame de Brégy, M. de Roquelaure, I did not go to sleep before day-break.— Charlotte came in to me at eleven o'clock ; I had spent the time, I don't know how, twisting my *Madras* round my head in the Chinese, Creole, Provençale, and Savoyard fashions, without being able to please myself with either ; I was angry with Charlotte ; she had tears in her eyes ; I gave her my box in the Theatre Feydeau for Sunday next.

“ It was near noon when my husband entered my chamber ; he had just returned from the Minister, and told me that his departure was fixed for the ensuing week.— His intention was that I should go and pass the summer on my estate in Burgundy, and I had a great deal of trouble in proving to him that it was more convenient that I should hire the Chateau d'Epernay, whence I might transport myself twice a week to

Paris, to visit the Opera, the Bouffons, and to hear news of him more readily. He concluded, as usual, by acknowledging that I was right, and promising that his man of business should go in the course of the day, and treat with the proprietor of the Chateau d'Epernay. We should breakfast together. Mademoiselle Despeaux sent me a hat of Italian straw—*It is a love!* (C'est un amour!) I was on my guard against telling M. de Corneil that it cost five hundred francs. We should have had a whole hour of moralizing.—Mademoiselle Charlotte comes to bring me my list of pensioners* ; she augments it every day, and the fashionable trades-people lose something by it.

“After writing some notes, I ordered my horses; I threw myself into my carriage

* Poor people relieved at home. Many ladies in Paris exercise this species of benevolence with as much generosity as discretion.—Note of the Author.

in dishabille and wrapped in a shawl, and went to the bath. I returned at one o'clock; my husband was tired of waiting; I thought I should have to breakfast alone; Madame Hennecourt and her daughter came to keep me company. We must wait till that young lady is married, before we know what name to give her silence and odd manner. As for the mother, every time I see her, I am tempted to tell her that when one has nothing agreeable to carry with them into the commerce of society, it would be well to possess some virtues to recommend them. Little Moreau came to present me with a sheet of the romance he has dedicated to me. My husband returned; his appearance put to flight the ladies, whom he does not like at all, and who do not return him more affection than they receive.

“I proposed to go with him to see the picture of the *Battle of Marengo*, by Vernet; I could do nothing better calculated to please him. The weather was beautiful; we

walked to the Rue de Lille. M. de Corneil was ravished with this painting, and particularly with its truth; he saw himself again at the head of his division; we should never have got away from the right wing, and the left wing, and the centre, and the reserve, and probably should have slept upon the field of battle, if I had, like him, forgotten the number of things I had to do. We return to our house; chance brought to our notice at Pont-tournant, the Karrick of Alfred, my husband's aide-de-camp and nephew; we met himself upon the terrace by the water-side. M. de Corneil being called by business elsewhere, invited him to conduct me to the Bois de Boulogne; my little nephew assented without pressing.

“The walk in the wood was charming; all Paris was there. We had a hearty laugh at the fat baroness with her *coupé verd* and armorial bearings, which occupied the whole surface of her pannels. Alfred made me remark that the poor woman followed, without suspecting it, the carriage of Ma-

dame d'Arcis, in which I thought I saw young Saint-Alme. Poor Baroness! she is even more unfortunate than ridiculous: I believe however that I exaggerate.

“ We returned to Paris about four o'clock. We looked in for a moment at the riding-school de Sourdis, where Madame Dutil-lais was taking her lesson—at her time of life to learn to ride on horseback! After whom would she race? We saw Madame de Brive, whom we had noticed at the Wood, enter with her Squire. She is a real Amazon! She is even more than that, if we may judge by her figure, by her voice, and, above all, by her bosom. Madame d'Angeville, whom I met at the riding-school, took me into her calash, and we went shopping together.

“ We soon stopped at Noustiers, to select some kerchiefs of shot-silk a-la-Bayadère; they are pretty, but will soon become common; in eight days they will be no longer wearable. The whole world of folly was at Le Normand's, where it is

fashionable to shew oneself. They were finishing the nuptial basket of Mademoiselle Servey! By the choice of stuffs one might guess the age and fortune of the intended. Courtois had received some Cashmire shawls: prejudice apart, those of Terneaux are far superior. After trying some hats at Le Roi's, ordered a trimming of kamelia at Nattier's, got at Tessier's some essences and pastilles of Aloes, I arrived at home at five o'clock, and hurried to my toilet. Because it had pleased some country friends to come two hours before dinner time, M. de Cormeil, who was tired of them, was so ill-humoured as to have a good mind to find fault with me when I appeared in the saloon; but I had dressed in a robe of which he is very fond, and which becomes me exceedingly; besides, Hyppolyte had dressed my head with so much taste, that my husband had not the courage to grumble at me:

"Well then, what say you, my dear Hermit," continued Madame de Cormeil,

while she ceased to dictate, "is not this a morning well filled up, and an article ready made?"—"So excellently, Madame, that I only ask your permission to publish it as it is, without altering any thing but the proper names . . . and without adding any reflections?"—"Without any! It is your affair to see if your readers will be amused with this gossiping."—"I judge for them by the pleasure I have had in listening to you!"

No. XII.—15th MAY, 1813.

A DUEL.

Les hommes, dans le fond raisonnables, mettent sous les règles leurs préjugés mêmes.

Men who are really reasonable, subject even their prejudices to rule.

MONTESQUIEU, *Esprit des Lois*.

A M. D. Bréant, an old officer, was constantly declaiming against the folly of duelling. A person took it into his head, in order to ascertain the sincerity of his philosophy, to inform him one day, that his

son had just received a very serious insult, for which he had the *courage not* to demand satisfaction. M. Bréant immediately gave the lie in form, to him who had invented this story, and was with the greatest difficulty prevented from fighting him. This inconsistency, of which I can cite examples still more recent, is the necessary result of the discordancy existing in this point between manners, morality, and the law. Of all the prejudices now in direct opposition to the established law, the point of honour is perhaps the most ancient, and, I am afraid to say it, that which is the most difficult to be overcome, because it is in some sort identified with the national character. Of what importance is it in reality, that the law forbids, under pain of death, that which honour commands under pain of shame, in a warlike nation, where education makes cowardice a crime, and contempt a dreadful punishment.

God forbid that I should wish to become the apologist of a barbarous custom, "of a

ferocious prejudice, which places all virtue on the point of the sword;" but leaving the application to it of all the odious names with which moralists have endeavoured to degrade it; I am of opinion that in the actual state of our society it is much easier to attack the principle than to avoid its consequences. On this subject people are willing to think generally with Rousseau, provided they are allowed to act on particular occasions like M. Bréant. Let us then acknowledge, that however blameable the practice of duelling may be, it finds a sort of excuse in the delicacy of the sentiments which it supposes to exist, a pretext in the decency and the politeness which it maintains in the world, and a powerful ally in the public opinion which protects it against the punishment of the law. Sanval, in his *Antiquities of Paris*, does not trace the origin of this sanguinary custom farther back than to Gondebaud, king of the Burgundians, who, he says, sanctioned the practice by the law *Gombette*. Other his-

torians attribute its invention to the Franks, our paternal ancestors ; but it is certain, that it was peculiar to this nation, as we see in the Life of Louis *le Debonnaire*, where it is said that Bernard demanded to clear himself of the crime imputed to him, by an appeal to arms, *more francis solito*. Once introduced into France, this custom was not slow in naturalizing itself. Chivalry, which adopted it, made it a fundamental principle of honour, and notwithstanding the severest laws, it could never be entirely extirpated. The ordinances of our kings have had no effect but to add disobedience to the crime they were intended to prevent, and the most illustrious blood has flowed on the scaffold in vain. It is even very remarkable that duels have never been more frequent than they were at those periods when they were most rigorously proscribed. The edict of Henry II. against duelling, issued in 1547, after the last authorized combat, between Jarnac and La Châtaigneraye, gave as it were the character

of fashion to that custom which was no longer resorted to as a judicial process. . Under the reign of Henry III. this frenzy, in defiance of the severity of the laws, was carried so far, that in allusion to the honours which had been paid by the king in the church of St. Paul to Caylus and Maignon (killed in duel, by D'Entragues and Riberac), it was customary to say, "*I shall have him sculptured in marble,*" to express, "*I shall kill him in a duel.*" Henry the Fourth is reproached with having displayed too much indulgence towards this species of crime ; but it has not been remarked, that in his time the examples of it were much less frequent than during the two reigns between which his was placed. Duellists under Louis XIII. were pursued with all the severity of the law, and an idea may be formed of their number, by an extract of the Chancery registers, from which it appears that more than a thousand pardons were granted by Louis XIV. during the first twenty years of his reign.

The famous Declaration of 1679, which

for a moment seemed to abate the duelling frenzy, only served to change the field of battle, which was then removed to the frontiers.

Duels still more frequent under the reign of Louis XV., became then less fatal; the point of honour obtained its regulating code, in which injuries were divided into two classes, and no longer required the same kind of satisfaction. It was settled that they should continue to fight for nothing, but that they should only kill each other for something, and then was invented that *mezzo termine*, that combat for first blood, in which says Rousseau, "*affectation is mixed with cruelty, and men are only slain by chance.*" It is on the subject of the last description of combats, that the author of *Eloisa* exclaims with that eloquent indignation, which dictated to him, perhaps, the finest pages which have ever been written in any language. "*The first blood! Great God! and what wilt thou do with that blood, ferocious monster? . . . Wilt thou drink it?*"

At that period, for the least word, a man was obliged to draw ; but it frequently happened, that a single crossing of the swords was considered a sufficient satisfaction for a slight offence. This ridiculous mania, did not escape dramatic authors, and supplied Fagan with one of the best scenes of his “ *Originaux*,” and with the highly comic part of *Bretenville*.

Up to that time, the sword had been the only weapon allowed in duels : the obligation of wearing it, constantly imposed, at the same time, that of knowing how to use it ; and the certainty of being skilful to defend their lives, made men less careful of exposing them. The alteration which took place in dress, under the reign of Louis XVI., probably contributed to introduce the use of pistols in duels. A mode of fighting which, by-the-bye, has nothing noble—nothing French in it, in which, courage cannot supply the want of skill, and in which you are compelled to kill a defenceless adversary, or to suffer yourself to be

killed in the same manner. This anti-chivalric custom now begins to be out of fashion.

For about two centuries *witnesses* have taken the place of *seconds*. This is at least one step towards reason and equity; for if it is inhuman to fight to avenge your own injury, it were certainly most absurd, to fight to avenge the injury of another, against a person who had neither offended you nor your friend. Witnesses in our days, regulate the mode and the conditions of the fight, and in no case will they allow the adversaries to meet with unequal arms. They were less scrupulous in the time of Henry III., since it is ascertained, that in the duel between Caylus and D'Entragues, the first was killed, because he had only a sword; while the other fought with a sword, and a dagger. On Caylus's observing this inequality, D'Entragues, who however, was considered a man of honour, replied drily, "*You have then committed a great fault to leave your dagger at home, for we are here to fight, and not to discuss*

our weapons." At that period, it appears that the offended had even the singular privilege of imposing upon his adversary any condition to which he chose to submit himself. This at least is the inference which may be drawn from a fact, related by Brantome. He speaks of having witnessed a duel between a gentleman of very small stature, and a very tall Gascon sergeant. The first regulated the conditions of the duel in such a manner, that they were both obliged to fight with a collar round the neck, armed with points, which compelled them to hold up their heads very high. "*This mode,*" says Brantome, "*had been invented very prettily by the little one, who could raise his head against his tall adversary, and mark him at his ease, which the other could not do against him, without bending and piercing his own throat. In this manner the short combatant dispatched the Gascon very easily with two thrusts of his sword.*" In our days, the short one would pass for a murderer, if he

could find a tall man fool enough, or a fool tall enough to accept of such conditions.

This dissertation, into which, I have almost unconsciously fallen, is only an introduction—perhaps rather too long, to the adventure which I have now to relate. One day last week as I was breakfasting with a Bavarian in one of the *Café's*, on the Boulevard, near some young men, who were making a more substantial repast, I heard one of them called Alfred, receiving the congratulations of his friends, on a marriage which he was on the eve of contracting with a lovely girl, to whom he was passionately attached. It would be difficult to say how a quarrel began between that young man and one of his friends, as I only paid attention to it, when it had grown so serious, as to give me some anxiety respecting the manner in which it might terminate. I only know that the question was originally, how far a woman may love a man who wears a wig? Alfred had uttered some witticisms on the occasion,

which one of his friends was foolish enough to apply to himself; these witticisms had been replied to by other repartees—ill-nature had intruded, and as it always happens, he who remained first without an answer, was the first to get angry. The sneer with which Alfred repulsed the attack of his adversary, caused the latter to lose all patience, and some words escaped from him, the consequences of which I easily foresaw. I availed myself of the authority of my age, and my former profession, to interfere as a mediator in this quarrel. I insisted on the extremely trivial nature of the cause. I extenuated as much as possible the meaning, and especially the intent of the offensive terms, which one of the adversaries had used, and it is probable that I should have succeeded in reconciling them, had there not been present several people, who, without having had any other duels on their hands, than those in which they had acted as seconds, find the means of acquiring a cheap reputation for bravery.

I still know some bravos of that kind, on the watch for every dispute, and ready to carry every challenge; not a single pistol shot has been fired, not a single sword-thrust made in Paris for these last twenty years, of which they cannot give an account. No one knows better than these, the laws and the formalities of duels; they spend their lives in the fencing-rooms of Le Sage and Peignet, on the way to, and in the alleys of the woods of Boulogne, and Vincennes; and firmly believe, they have fought as often as they have seen others fight.

Desponding at the fruitlessness of my efforts, and the small success of my mediation, I saw with real grief, those young men, who, an hour before were inseparable friends, depart, after having appointed a meeting at noon at the Barrier of the *Champs-Élysées*. I conceived for the one who was called Alfred, and who was not better known to me than the rest, that sympathetic interest to which we

often surrender ourselves without inquiring into the cause; he appeared to be the youngest; loving and beloved;—his life seemed to belong, as it were, to two families. But there still perhaps remained some means of preventing the misfortune, of which I had a sad presentiment. I walked pensively towards the place of the meeting, and chanced to encounter in the great alley of the Champs-Elysées, an officer of the Chasseurs of the guard, whom I am in the habit of seeing at his relation's, Madame de R * * * *, and who is not more distinguished for the nobleness of his disposition, than for the renown of his valour. As I concluded my relation of the circumstances attending the approaching duel to the captain, we saw two carriages, in which the adversaries and their seconds were seated, arrive one after the other. The captain was on horseback; at my request he followed the carriages, which took the road to the wood of Boulogne, having promised to give me an account of all that

should happen. I had not much time to make long reflections on the strength of a tyrannical prejudice, which silences humanity, justice, and reason—which compels two friends to murder each other, and which allows judges (when an appeal is made to the authority of the laws), to condemn a criminal, whose conduct they approve, and would imitate in a similar case. At the moment when I reached the gate of the wood of Boulogne, I saw captain S * * * hastily approaching, and read in his countenance the fatal news which he had to communicate. He gave his horse to the care of a boy on the green, and leading me into a neighbouring alley, related to me in a few words the cruel catastrophe, of which he had been a spectator. “The carriages,” said he, “having stopped near *La Muette*, the four persons which they contained, alighted, and glided precipitately into the wood. I followed them, and having given my name, begged permission to interfere in a quarrel, with some of the

particulars of which, I was already acquainted.—‘ You are welcome captain,’ answered the younger of the two adversaries, ‘ but spare us humiliating explanations at this moment, which could have no other result in any case, than to delay an encounter which is unavoidable.’ Despairing of ultimate success, I endeavoured in my quality of witness, to alter something in the forms of the duel ; we settled that only one shot should be fired on each side ; that they should be placed at a distance of twenty paces, and that they should fire together on a given signal : I myself loaded Alfred’s pistol, and made him take the lower part of the ground, which is of advantage in a pistol fight ; I also advised him to moderate his impetuosity, which gave his adversary a decided superiority over him. All the arrangements being made, the antagonists on their ground, the pistols in their hands and cocked, the signal was given,—they fired,—and the unfortunate young man, for whom you and I had so much inter-

ested ourselves, fell mortally wounded." The grief which this fatal event excited in my heart, was the deepest which I have experienced for a long while, and I could not check my tears when the carriage passed me, which contained the remains of that unhappy youth, now to be carried back to his father, who at that very moment was employed in preparing for the celebration of his nuptials.

No. XIII.—29th MAY, 1813.

A HOUSE OF THE RUE DES ARCIS.

Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.

JUVENAL, Sat. 3.

La pauvreté nous expose à la risée des sots ;
c'est, peut-être, ce qu'elle a de plus insupportable.

Poverty exposes us to the laughter of fools,
which is perhaps one of its most insupportable evils.

Reconnais donc, Antoine, et conclus avec moi,
Que la pauvreté mâle, active et vigilante,
Est, parmi les travaux, moins lasse et plus
contente
Que la richesse oisive au sein des Voluptés.

BOILEAU, Epit.

I HAVE already somewhere quoted an excellent remark by the Author of the

Essay upon Paris: he observes, that at the time when he wrote (1750), his attorney was very poorly lodged in the Hotel of the Chancellor Duprat, and the wife of his librarian made their beds in the saloon of the baths of Gabrielle d'Estrées. It is vexatious, that after having caught a glimpse at this original and fruitful manner of treating his subject, Saint-Foix should have abandoned it to exhaust himself in endless dissertations upon the *Metempsychosis*, the *religion of the Indian Lingamistes*, and the *morals of Mahometans*, all of them matters which had nothing to do with the Pont-au-Change and the Place-Royale. There might be, in my opinion, a history of Paris more curious and more philosophical than that which shews us the principal monuments of this great city, as in theatres where time unceasingly renews the decorations and actors: this picture, the fidelity of which should be its chief merit, and which would require the most accurate research, would give birth to many singular contrasts,

and very odd coincidences. At an epoch when so many edifices rise from ruins, when so many palaces replace old falling tenements, and alter, if we may use the expression, the physiognomy of this queen of cities, I could wish that we might find means to preserve all the valuable traces which fame has left in these wrecks; I could wish that they did not take a single step without pointing out by an inscription, well attested and ostensible, the place where any grand event happened, the house of any illustrious personage, the spot where the ashes of the great reposed. Several investigations of this kind have been gone into, but no work collecting them into one focus has ever been produced. It is a shame to think that ninety-nine out of a hundred Parisians daily crossing the Court of the Saint-Chapelle are ignorant of the fact that Boileau in his youth inhabited a garret within its bounds; that Racine lodged in the Rue des Maçons, on the site where now stands the house, No. 17. Thanks to St. Evre-

mont, who so accurately designated it, some persons can still discover the address of Ninon, in the Rue des Tournelles; but there are very few who could point out to a stranger the hotel in the Rue de Bétizy, where Admiral Coligny was assassinated, and that other hotel of Carnavalet, rendered so celebrated by Madame de Sevigny, which is yet to be seen in the Rue Culture-sainte-Catherine, No. 27, just on the spot where the Constable de Clisson, was attacked by the murderers hired by Pierré de Craon. How many remarkable coincidences would occur in examining the changes which the same place has experienced! The frequenters of the *Tivoli d'Hiver* have no suspicion that they dance in the house in which died Jeanne d'Albret, the mother of a *good king*; a tax-gatherer of the *Droits-reunis* would not give himself any trouble were he told that he to-day revised an account of tobacco in the eating-room of the Constable Anne de Montmorency; and this fishmonger would have

a hearty laugh next Sunday on going to see the *Médecin malgré lui*, if she knew that it was performed in the market of Saint Joseph on the very spot where Moliere was interred. The example has been set by M. Cailhava: we owe to this academician the bust and inscription which consecrate the house under the piazzas, where the immortal author of the *Tartufe* and the *Misanthrope* was born. To revive or to preserve so many precious memorials of which the tradition is every day becoming lost, it would be desirable that well-informed men, invested with the character of public officers, should be authorized to take cognizance of the original title-deeds of all private property. I am sure that there is not an old building in this vast metropolis, respecting which they would not make some discovery more or less interesting. The following is the foundation for my opinion.

When we live to old age, it generally happens that we fall into some inheritance. About three or four years ago I had be-

queathed to me a very old house in the *Rue des Arcis*, the title-deeds of which were presented to me in a tin case, which I have lately had occasion to open, in order to elucidate a dispute respecting a party-wall. Among all the rubbish of waste paper, pulverized or turned yellow by time, I found a number of contracts of sale, by means of which I was enabled to scrape a sort of acquaintance with all the proprietors who had been my predecessors. The most ancient of these is a Nicholas Rondelet, Steward to King Charles the Fifth, from whom I learn that the *Rue des Arcis*, called in his time the *Rue des Assiz*, was formerly denominated *Vicus des Arsionibus*, and that it received this name in consequence of the houses having been burnt by the Normans in 886. (How much is this etymology superior to that of the *Sieur de Launoy*, who derives the appellation of *Assiz* from the *Assyrians*, who, as he says, traded to Paris,—God knows in what epoch!) But be this as it may, the Steward

Rondelet, in 1395, sold *our* house to Jean de Rieux, Marechal of France; it reached at this era the Apogee of its glory, and remained in this family under the title of the *Hotel de Rieux*, till the year 1588, when it was purchased by a Spanish captain, who resided in Paris at the period of the League. This noble Castilian was killed in an action with the royal army, and the house sold to a Squire of Madame de Montpensier, whose widow surrendered it by agreement to a young Serjeant of Louis XIII., who disposed of it to a Frankfort Jew, for money to pay his warlike equipments. It was next bought by a Citizen of Paris, who reckoned in his own family two hundred years of shrivalt, in virtue of which title fancying himself obliged to take part in the war of La Fronde, he one morning, after breakfasting with his family, took his matchlock, and went to be killed by chance on the 2d of July, 1652, in combat at the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. La Porte, Valet-de-Chambre to Louis XIV., pur-

chased this house from the children of the warlike sheriff. He resided in it many years, and gave it as a dowry to his daughter, who married an Auditor of Accounts. The Auditor sold it to buy another in the *Marais*, at that time the fashionable quarter. After this, our house changed its master four times in three months, and finally came into the possession of one of my grand-aunts, whose last son on dying left it to me.

Since the date of my becoming owner of this venerable tenement, it never entered into my head to pay it a visit: I have a principal *Locataire**, to whose superintendence I trust these affairs. This occupation of principal *Locataire* is a profession truly Parisian. More than three thousand individuals, who have no other means of existence than to act between the proprietor and the tenants of a house, through this employment acquire incomes, some of them

*A sort of agent.

very considerable. My principal *Locataire*, all attorney as he was, took but little more than his proper charges on the rent of 1800 francs which we gained together on the general occupation of the house. His death has been a source of tribulations to me. For six months I have heard of nothing but arrears of rent, of warnings, of doors and windows in want of repairs.—The produce of the building does not do more than pay the expences which it costs me. Yesterday, the bailiff comes to me for his fees for recovering from a tenant in arrear; to-day, the glazier calls for his bill; to-morrow, it will be a poor devil who lodges in a garret, to whom I must not only give leave to depart freely, because he has not the means of paying, but to whom I must absolutely lend some money, before he goes, to enable him to remove! In this labyrinth of tiresome business, where I learn nothing, and where I would be troubled ever to learn any thing, how much do I admire the spirit of order and firmness of

the deceased, who certainly displayed in the *administration* of three houses of the *Rue des Arcis* (for he was also principal *Locataire* for the two houses adjoining mine) more talent and a more intimate acquaintance with financial calculations than would have sufficed for the government of a province.

Well convinced that I had no other resource left to avoid being ruined by having become a proprietor, but to take personal cognizance of the charges and emoluments attendant upon my property, I at last determined on examining my house from the cellar to the garret, and visiting every one of my tenants. Accompanied by a solicitor and an architect, I took a coach one day last week, and bent my course to the *Rue des Arcis*.

Nothing can be less imposing than the façade of this ancient habitation of a *Maréchal* of France. The door of a very narrow passage, and the two little shops with which it is flanked, have evidently been

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taken from a coach entrance, of which the roof and gothic ornaments are yet visible. The shop on the right is occupied by a wine-merchant, and that on the left by a fruiterer. A coach stopping at this place, where probably never coach stopped before in the memory of man, produced a sensation in the house which was still further augmented by the discovery that this vehicle contained the proprietor. The portress, to give herself an air of business, which her appearance too evidently belied, came to receive me with a besom in her hand. The fruiterer and wine-merchant ran, the one to engage me to look at the cellar, the vault of which was cracked, and the other to beg of me to allow him a shed, of which he stood in need to lodge four of his youngest children.

I entered the wine-merchant's, where I found many ticket-porters and some masons seated round a table, and breakfasting with a good appetite on a bit of household bread, a little cheese, some duck's eggs, and

a few pints of a small claret. The wine-merchant and the fruiterer thus played into one another's hands: the wine of the one promoted the sale of the eggs and *Marolles* cheese of his neighbour, who, in requital, sent him his customers to buy wine. After receiving the compliments of the wine-merchant and his family, and of two or three coachmen, who were drinking a glass of brandy at the counter, I despatched the architect to inspect the cellar, and give orders for the necessary repairs. While he was gone, I entered a little dark hole dignified with the name of a chamber, and questioned the portress, as to the situation, physical and moral, of every inhabitant of the house.

Of all the fair means which a curious person, who has *no Devil upon two Sticks* in his service, may employ, to become speedily acquainted with the entire news of any part of Paris, an intelligent and talkative portress offers incomparably the most con-

venient and certain. It is unknown to what pitch this class of domestics carry the talent for observation, and the information which may be extracted from their leisure. By address and caution, lovers may hope to conceal their connexion from the watchfulness of a mother or the jealousy of a husband; debtors may for a long time hide the derangement of their finances from their creditors; but neither the one nor the other can flatter themselves with being able to escape the penetration of a portress who possesses in the smallest degree the talent belonging to her station. Mine is a perfect model of the kind. Her lodge is the rendezvous of all the gossips in the neighbourhood, from the Pont-au-Change to the Rue des Lombards, and there is not a servant, nor a nursery maid, who does not in going for milk in the morning, stop a moment to chat with Mother *Potin*. Thus the most trifling matter does not happen in the whole quarter without her receiving the first intelligence of it, and being ready

to repeat it to you with the most minute details. I had a good opportunity for putting her good-will to the test ; on this occasion I confined myself to obtaining an account of my tenants ; but at some future time I may extend my inquiries to the history of the whole neighbourhood.

The first floor of my house, once honoured by the footsteps of the Steward's and the Maréchal's ladies, is now occupied by a mantua-maker. When I entered, there were twelve young girls ranged round a table, who sung while they wrought under the eye of their mistress : these invited me into a room whose beechwood furniture, cleaned with a varnish of bees'-wax, and well rubbed with flannel, displayed a sort of comfort and ease, which does not always belong to the richest trappings. Mademoiselle Bobinet, the head mantua-maker, asked me to lower her rent, simply for the sake of not departing from the custom on such visits, and complained of a smoky chimney, and a gutter belonging to the

fourth story, which incommoded the passage. I took a memorandum of these demands, and re-crossed the room of the young workwomen, whose songs my presence had suspended. The portress had told me that Mademoiselle Bobinet was one of the most celebrated mantua-makers in the parish, and that there was not a confectioner's wife in the Rue des Lombards, nor a grocer's in the Rue de la Verrerie, who did not wish to have a robe or a dress of her making. Mademoiselle Bobinet, whom thirty years had rendered a little more *enbonpoint*, without robbing her of her bloom, had six months ago lost her mother; and only waited for the termination of her mourning to marry a lad belonging to the Annuity Record Office, who had courted her two years, and never missed a single Sunday to take her to dine à la *Chaumière**, and dance at the Grands-Mar-

* In the country; from *Chaumière*, a thatched cottage.

roniers, without the reputation of Made-moiselle Bobinet even incurring the slightest stain.

The other portion of the first floor is occupied by a dyer, whose wife presented herself before me, and drowned a futile request in a deluge of words, with no other object but to divert the conversation which my Solicitor in vain attempted to introduce on the subject of three quarters rent in ar-rear, which the lady did not take into her account. While she spoke, her husband in a cap of blue cotton, and with his naked arms of the same colour, was stirring a decoction of madder in a caldron, to dye a piece of Merino stuff, in the Cachemire fashion. The steam from the caldron was any thing but agreeable; I endured it with pain; the wicked dyer observed this, and found means by stirring his lye with more ardour, to prevent me from taking any part in the discussion. I left the Solicitor to bicker it out with the dyer, and mounted myself to the second story.

The two principal occupants of this floor, which comprises four rooms, are a German bootmaker and a Prussian maker of instruments. Bound to each other by ties of the closest friendship, they pass one part of the week in working, and the other in tippling together. While I was conversing with them about a communication-door which they desired to have opened, a musician of the ball-room in St. Martin's square, came in for a violoncello which he had lent them. It was taken from the top of the old press, where it had been exiled for three months, to the great satisfaction of a family of mice, who had taken up their abode in the interior of the instrument, and who evacuated the place on the first summons with the most ludicrous celerity.—The owner of the violoncello did not think the matter so pleasant as it appeared to us, and began a dispute with the instrument-maker, which was only terminated by the interference of the Commissary of Police.

On the same staircase lodged a Clerk to the Port-au-vins, husband to a fish-vender in the market *des Innocents*. Both these persons were, at the period of my visit, at their posts, and the care of the house was left to their eldest daughter, a girl of twelve years of age. Four little creatures, seated on the ground round a great dish, were gaily devouring a soup, or rather a mash of potatoes, while their sister, who was washing in a corner, surveyed them with all the tenderness and all the authority of a mother. I amused myself for a few moments with contemplating this domestic scene, worthy of the pencil of Greuze. The mother returned, saluted me with a frank and lively politeness, and, after caressing her children, giving each a long bunch of Burgundy grapes, she turned to me to tell me of the *hardness* of the times, of a disorder to which her husband was subject, of the bankruptcy which had compelled him to relinquish a large house he had furnished, and finished by obtaining

from me, contrary to the advice of my counsel, a diminution upon the new lease which I agreed to grant.

Scenes of another kind awaited me on the third floor, where I have for tenants, persons who were certainly never destined to meet on this stage. One of the two households is that of a modeller of figures in plaster; he *was sifting* at the moment we entered, and the door was no sooner opened than we were enveloped in a cloud of white dust which choked us, and in an instant changed the coat of my solicitor from the black which it was before, into a strange mixture of mouse-colour and grey. Through this atmosphere of alabaster we discovered at the bottom of the chamber, something like what is represented as *ombres* in the opera, two children who were moving about a silken sieve, while their mother pounded lumps of plaster upon the floor with a mallet. The portress took the opportunity to suggest the removal of these tenants, who degraded the house, and of whom all the

others bitterly complained. These complaints gave rise to a terrible squabble between her and the modeller; and their voices, equally shrill, were mingled with fits of coughing, stimulated by the quantities of dust, which they swallowed whenever they opened their mouths to speak. The latter with his modelling tool in his hand nearly strangled himself in endeavouring to tell us in bad French, "that he was an *estimable* artist, a native *di Bologna*, a pupil of Canova," (whose chisel it is most probable he never sharpened). In his gesticulations, the arm of the Bolognese came too nearly into contact with the nose of the irascible portress, who put herself into a fencing posture with the handle of her besom, but not without causing notorious damage to the busts of Cicero and Demosthenes. The wife and children of the *Mallets*, to revenge the injury done to their father in the persons of the Greek and Roman Orators, made some wrecks of the Apollo and a Gladiator fly at the head of the lady portress. God

knows where the havock would have stepped, if my solicitor, whom both parties challenged to be a witness for them, had not interfered to put an end to the fray. The portress insisted on compensation for the blows she had received, and the modeller demanded payment for his broken plasters. One point he chiefly enforced, and that was, to prove to me in his gibberish, that in the country of the arts, genius ought not to be compelled to fulfil its pecuniary stipulations; that he had not wherewithal to pay his rent, and that he could not quit the premises unless I would give him sixty francs and let him go. "You shall lose nothing by me," added he proudly, for "I engage to acquit myself before the expiration of six months, by modelling your bust in *terra cotta* for the ensuing exhibition, and according to a new mode which I have very lately invented." What could I do better than close with this proposition? Although I might distrain and sell all that he possessed, (not even excepting the *Abbe in plaster*, which he has ex

posed for six years at the corner of the Rue Saint Florentin) the produce would not defray the expenses of the process, and I might stand a chance of some day seeing myself parodied in the Saloon, as agreeably as I have been at the Vaudeville.

The portress, whose good-will I had secured by this attention, requested me in a low voice to go alone to the persons who occupied the only lodging of consequence, which remained for me to see. I was already inclined to do this, from an air of exterior propriety, for which the habitations of my other tenants did not prepare me. The little door painted grey, the straw mat, the slate in a frame on which to write addresses, the bell with a deer's-foot pull; all these things appeared to be of good augury. I rung—a very sweet voice demanded—“*Who is there?*” I mentioned my name, and the door opened. If I had been only forty years younger, I should probably have been struck by one of those thunderclaps, which heroes of romance

never escape at the first sight of a girl of fifteen, who appeared to receive me, and whose modest demeanour, and ravishing beauty compelled the highest admiration. Thanks to the Para-tonnerre,* which time has given me, I got off for a very agreeable surprise, and I did not stammer at all, in requesting this young lady to inform her mother, that I desired to speak with her. She left me in the anti-room while she went to deliver my message.

This chamber was the largest of the three, of which the lodging consisted. It was easy to see from the manner in which it was furnished, that it served alternately as a working-room, a dining-room, and a drawing-room. A small pallet of earthenware; a round table, upon which were ranged some little pieces of cambric cut into various shapes and shells full of co-

* This whimsical compound is formed after the fashion of para-pluyé and para-sol, but *para-thunder* could scarcely do for translation.

hours ; a piano-forte ; a little portable book-case hung in a corner, and some vases of flowers, comprised the moveables of this chamber, over which, an attention to order, good taste, and the luxury of neatness, shed a degree of elegance not easily to be described. It is a common saying, "*tell me your company, and I will tell you what you are ;*" we might pronounce with as much truth, "*tell me what you read, and I will tell you what you are.*" On looking into the little library of my amiable tenants, I discovered that it contained the *Petit-Carême*, *Télémaque*, the tragedies of Racine, those of Voltaire, the *Henriade*, the *Genius of Christianity*, *Paul et Virginie*, and the *Tales of Madame Cotin* : I therefore concluded, conformably to a system of which I may perhaps one day develope the theory, that Madame Dervas (the lady who inhabits these apartments), was of distinguished birth ; that she had a strong mind ; liable to confound its sentiments with its opinions ; that she had met great misfor-

tunes, to which love was no stranger, and that she sought in religion to sustain her resolution; and perhaps even to palliate her errors. Should my conjectures be verified, it will offer me an occasion for again trespassing on my readers with the story of two persons for whom I may, without committing myself, avow that I feel the most lively interest.

Madame Dervas appeared with her daughter; and her deportment striking for its dignity, politeness, and reserve, confirmed me in the favourable impression I had received before seeing her. I expressed to her, much less energetically than I wished, how much pleasure it afforded me to reckon her among the number of my tenants, and begged her to inform me if there was any thing which, as proprietor of the mansion, I could do to render her habitation more agreeable. On thanking me in the most gracious manner, she announced, with an expression of regret, the intention she entertained of leaving her lodgings. I

requested to know the cause of this resolution, and I was glad to learn that it was nothing more than the inconveniency she experienced from her neighbours. "They are honest people," added she, "but the trade they carry on is a little noisy, and the artificial flowers which my daughter and I make, agree very ill with the plaster powder which our neighbour sends us, and which penetrates through every thing." I hastened to expedite the removal of the Bolognese artist, and was carried so far by my zeal, as to engage not to let his apartment to any but a tenant, whose vicinity should be agreeable.

After a few moments conversation on the object of my visit, I endeavoured in the most adroit way I could devise, by enlarging upon my own private affairs, to provoke Madame de Dervas to a confidence, which she avoided with great dignity, without seeming to think herself lowered by the species of interest which was the only excuse for my indiscretion. I departed, so-

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liciting permission to renew my call; it was granted, and that I may more frequently have an opportunity to avail myself of it, I have a mind to keep a little lodging for myself in my house of the *Rue des Arcis*.

No. XIV.—10th JULY, 1813.

THE BALCONY OF THE OPERA.

———— Vera incesso potuit Dea.

VIRGIL.

I KNEW in my youth an old Procurator of Parliament, (so rich as to be able to leave his study at two o'clock to the care of an upper clerk) who found it more agreeable to lead the life of a lad, at the age of sixty-

four, than to place himself, bachelor-like, under the interested guidance of a governess. This Procurator, whom I yet see, and who would not have been uglier than other people, but for the enormous size of his nose, never failed, immediately after dinner, to take his cup of coffee at Procope's, where he was the dramatic oracle. Thence he went to the Comedie-Française, where he was sure to be found every evening in the pit, near the railing of the orchestra, to which he fastened a little wooden stool, which served him, if not to sit upon, at least to rest on between the acts.

This ancient amateur, of a more correct taste and more cultivated mind than at that period belonged to his brethren of the long robe, had his memory stored with a prodigious number of theatrical anecdotes, which he told to admiration, and from which the Abbe de la Porte, with whom he was intimate, has gathered the best part of his collection of anecdotes since publish-

ed. M. Duvivier (for that was his name,) had seen three generations of tragic queens pass away before his eyes. He remembered Madame *Desmares*; he was present when Mademoiselle *Lecouvreur* took leave of the stage; and he divided his affections between Mademoiselles *Clairon* and *Dumenil*. We were always sure to see him enter in excessive ill-humour when a production of Corneille or Racine, by chance, failed to attract a crowded house. He then railed bitterly against the bad taste of the age and the folly of his contemporaries, and maintained with a sort of fury, that every man whose mind was not alienated, ought to enjoy the same pleasure in the hundredth representation of *Cinna* as in the first.

At the other end of the table, as if to serve for a balance to the Procurator, sat the Chevalier de Marency, a retired officer, whose enthusiasm for the opera was not less ardent nor less exclusive than that of M. Duvivier for the *Comedie-Français*.

This dissimilarity in their tastes, imparted to the antipathy which they entertained against each other, the character of the utmost hatred. They delighted in disputation, and often maintained the pre-eminence of their favourite spectacles with all the bigotted rage of two sectaries of different religions, which they still further resembled in the mania of proselytism. The victory was a long time doubtful, and was adjudged to those who could carry off the greatest number of associates to the *Café Procope*, or the *Café Militaire* in the Rue *Saint-Honore*, nearly opposite the Palais-Royal, where the opera-house then stood. Of all his partisans, the one whom the Chevalier Marency loved most, was a young Marquis of Bressac, who had recently quitted the hotel of the pages, to enter that of the musqueteers. This gentleman, who was very fond of music, had the misfortune to take lessons in singing from a *Buffo* of the name of Manelli, who came to Paris with

the first ultramontane troop whom we saw in this capital. This choice of an Italian master was singularly displeasing to the Chevalier, and M. de Bressac lost his affections for ever, by one day declaring "that the Italian music was much finer than the French, and that he only went to the opera for the sake of the dance." So horrid a blasphemy gave the signal for a dreadful civil war, which lasted half a century, and of which it was more easy to foresee the result than to assign the termination. The Chevalier harangued in the green-room and saloons, in favour of his friends *Mondonville, Fouquet, and Rameau*; the Marquis emulated him in extolling also in the saloons and under the trees of the Palais-Royal, *the Scarlati, the Leo, the Durante*; and the animosity between the two champions rose to such a pitch, that they forsook the Balcony of the Opera, where it was impossible for them to meet together without quarrelling, and with their separate friends, established themselves at the

opposite extremities of the Orchestra : the Marquis de Bressac under the queen's box, and the Chevalier Marency under that of the king, whence is derived the phrase of *the queen's corner*, and *the king's corner*, being the places where the two armies had their head quarters, and the commanders assembled their staff.

Pamphlets were the first weapons to which they had recourse. Marency employed young Patu to compose the *Adieux de Goût*, (farewells of taste) against the Italian Buffos. This criticism replete with sense, attic salt, and spirit, caused a duel to be fought between him and the Marquis de Bressac, in which the young author received a thrust of a sword, which a few years after consigned him to the grave. Next year Grimm published his *Petit Prophete* against the *Ramistes*; and the *Letter of Rousseau on the French Music* was the brand which enveloped both corners of the Opera in flames. When the storm was at its height, the men of sense, the real ama-

teurs who wanted only good music without troubling themselves about the name of the composer, took refuge in the *Balcony* as in a place where they might observe the signs of the times, and count the shipwrecks. From this epoch we may date the eclat and influence of the *Balcony of the Opera*, which enjoys at this theatre the privilege which the pit usurps at the others, of pronouncing final sentence on the merits of pieces and performers.

The Chevalier died; the small success which attended the *Armide* of Lully on its last revival, accelerated his fate. The General of the *Queen's Corner* having no longer any rival in the opposite party worthy of his prowess, like another Montécuculi after the death of Turenne, abandoned the command of his forces, and returned to his place in the *Balcony*, of which the President de Miremont and the *Bailli Descares* were then the most remarkable and constant frequenters. The former came there to deplore the loss of Mademoi-

selle Prévost, of whom he had been for twenty years something more than the admirer, and to whose memory Mademoiselle * * * * had, as report goes, the glory of rendering him faithless. The prude Sallé, of old the object of the Bailli's tender cares, was still the theme of his praise; but as he was ruined by her, he did not think himself bound to repeat the eulogies which Voltaire had bestowed upon his *vertu*. Mademoiselles Lany and Alard were already the delight of the Opera, and particularly of M. M. de Bressac and de Luxembourg. When yet young, I left Paris, to which I did not return for five or six years. I remained a very short while, and other travels which ensued and occupied a more extended period, finished by rendering me an entire stranger to the new generations of actors, dancers, and spectators, who succeeded each other at the Opera during my long absence, till, at last, the lapse of time effaced from my memory even the names of the persons whose re-

membrance was intertwined with the recollections of my earliest years; an unexpected circumstance recalled them to my mind.

I went a few days ago to the Opera, to see *Armide*, and took my favourite place on the right side of the Balcony. Near me, on the same bench, sat a man about my own age, whose blue coat, buttoned from top to bottom, little plaited stock, and buckle borrowed from the cavalry fashion, proclaimed him to be an old officer. With his crutch-headed cane between his legs, he appeared to be listening to the conversation of those around him; and, in the visible and impatient displeasure which it caused him, he every moment opened and shut a tortoise-shell snuff-box, which he held in his hand, turning each time to the side on which I was, to address himself to me. I have not forgot one word of our conversation, and for the sake of exactitude I shall copy out the first part of it, by way of dialogue:

The Stranger. "In your time and mine, Sir, (for I believe we date from the same era) people did not utter such foolish impertinence in so loud a tone of voice, nor did they come to the Balcony of the Opera in boots with switches in their hands!"

The Hermit. "They dressed better, but they sometimes reasoned as badly."

The Stranger. "It is six and thirty years since I set my foot in the Opera-house. I was here for the last time in 1777, the day of the first representation of this very *Armide* of the Chevalier Gluck, which I found, let me tell you, far inferior to that of Lully.

The Hermit. "If you have lost your prejudices you will now judge differently."

The Stranger. "How divinely Mademoiselle Fel sang the admirable duet in the fifth act!"

The Hermit. "You have behind you M. de L * * *, who will not suffer you to forget the impression which Mademoiselle Arnould produced in the same duet, in

which you are about to hear an actress who surpasses both the one and the other."

The Stranger. " 'Tis little matter after all; for I will say to you what I said in this same place half a century ago; *there is no music like the Italian music, and I only come here for the dance.*"

The Hermit. " You bring to my recollection at this moment the grand contention of the Buffoons, who * * * * *."

The Stranger. " For fear you took any concern in it, you ought to be apprized that you are speaking to the Marquis de Bressac."

[As I have no intention of spinning out the recollections of this comedy, I make a present to my readers of "*What can that be you! How happens it! By what chance!*" and twenty other exclamations, which mean nothing more than that people have lost sight of each other for a long time, and are very much surprised at meeting again.]

The Marquis. " We were just speaking

of Mademoiselle Fel. You remember that Desmahis, when at supper with me, made the verse in which he called that Armide a Sorceress."

The Hermit. "I also remember that Grimm wished to fight a duel with him, in the hope of touching the heart of the unfeeling beauty, and that he was answered by the verse of Regnard,

"Q'un amant mort pour nous, nous mettrait
" en crédit !"

The Marquis. "You breakfasted with me and the lusty Fargenville on the day when Barthe read to us his famous *Règlement* which made so much noise in the Green-Room.

The Hermit. "It is indisputably the finest piece of humour that has been written on the Opera."

Here the curtain drew up, and the performance commenced. Every point, every actor became the subject of a discussion for us between the acts. At the close of

the second, the Marquis confessed that there was no serious Opera which could fairly be compared to this Masterpiece.

Obliged to acknowledge that the French Opera had improved prodigiously both with respect to the music and execution, he wanted, by way of compensation, to extract from me a confession that the dancing had wonderfully degenerated; that it was now confined to the art of multiplying pirouettes; that all the kinds were confounded; and that even in the *half-character* (the only kind that had been preserved) there was nothing that could stand in comparison with Mademoiselle Guinard. I was going to reply to him by citing, in common with all Paris, the elegant précision, the decorum, the admirable finish of the dance of Madame Gardel; the exquisite grace of Mademoiselle Bigottini; when Mademoiselle Gosselin made her appearance. I never saw conversion more rapid, nor assertion more speedily refuted. The Nestor of the Balcony was opening his mouth to tell me

that the arms of this young dancer were a little too long, at the moment she opened them with an inexpressible charm, which did not suffer him to clothe his first idea in words. His admiration increased at every step, at every movement of the modern Terpsichore, and was manifested by exclamations which, happily for him, were lost amid the tumult of applause with which the theatre resounded. The Marquis is not merely a simple amateur of the art of dancing; he is an able connoisseur, and with this title, his opinion of the talents of Mademoiselle Gosselin ought to have some weight.

It is impossible, if we believe him, to unite in a higher degree all the qualities which constitute a perfect dancer: an extreme lightness; an immoveable steadiness, which always makes her mistress of the point of termination in the most rapid movements, when and how she pleases; a grace most happily combined of strength and skill; but, above all, a flexibility, an

enchanting negligence, which gives the dance a character of inimitable voluptuousness.

I am convinced of the truth of all the Marquis said; but I did not exclaim one atom the less about the decline of spirit and taste, on observing that the poetry of Quinault and the music of Gluck, executed with rare perfection by Nourrit and Madame Branchu, obtained less applause and excited less enthusiasm than a single dance of Mademoiselle Gosselin.

No. XV.—7th AUGUST, 1813.

A YOUNG MAN'S DAY.

Most times, the greatest art is to comply
In granting that which justice may deny.

KING.

La jeunesse doit regarder devant, et la vieillesse
derrière soi.

MONTAIGNE.

To be a Mentor is a noble employment.
How many old men conceive themselves
called upon to perform that office, without
any other qualification than their age ! It

is true that Minerva when she accompanied Telemachus, put on a grey beard; but this beard concealed her wisdom: in these days we should be often deceived, if we trusted to one. It is not the ambition of maintaining a paradox, that induces me to assert that for some years past, there has been, between the old and the young men, a complete exchange of their good and bad qualities, of their virtues and their vices; an exchange so radical, as to render it difficult to know an old man from a young one, except by the colour of his hair, and the manner of his reception among women. I could cite as many cases of young men who are morose, prudent, circumspect, and selfish, as of old ones, who are giddy, extravagant, dissolute, and indiscreet. This exchange of qualities has produced caricatures equally ridiculous, whether considered in a physical or moral point of view. It is a singular reproach to make to a young man of the present day, to say that he is too prudent, and yet that reproach may

be often justly applied. The foresight of fathers never had fewer obstacles to overcome from the passions of their sons. A modern young man may safely be admitted into the family consultations, whether the object of them be to choose for him a profession or a wife. It is astonishing with what calmness and accuracy he will calculate the advantages of the one, and the portion of the other. Be not under any apprehension that love will blind, or that enthusiasm will mislead him. The young men of the present day know as well as their grandfathers how to guard themselves against all illusions of that kind. They are not old enough to have any recollection, but they already have experience. At twenty years of age, they have no longer any passions, and they have got the gout. If I am not very much disposed to admire this green maturity of our juvenile race, I look with contempt on those old men, who endeavour to prolong the appearance of youth, at the expense of general esteem and consideration. The

little respect which is now paid to old age, has been cited, and with reason as a proof, of the decline of public manners. But our attention is not sufficiently directed to those examples which serve as excuses, or at least as pretexts for these violations of public morality. The scandal of the profligate life of one old man has a much more powerful effect upon public manners than the dissoluteness of an hundred young ones. The authority of age is felt, even in the very contempt which it draws upon itself. The proof of this truth, founded upon a notorious fact, and one in which I am personally interested, will lead me, though in an inverted sense, from the object which I proposed. I will begin without further preamble.

I have a distant relation who calls me cousin, (the title of grand uncle would be more appropriate) whom I have already introduced to my readers, under the name of *Ernest de Lallé*.* He is a captain of hus-

* In a paper omitted in this selection.—Tr.

sars, carries his arm in a sling, wears a cross at his button hole, has 25,000 francs a year to spend ; in a word, he has all the qualities which *Julia D'Etanges* requires in a lover. All these advantages are quite enough to enable him to pass the leave of absence which he has obtained for the recovery of his health, agreeably at Paris, and to give a great deal of uneasiness to a tender and very economical father, who lives eighty-four leagues from the capital. Invested as it were by power of attorney, with a part of his authority, I was bound, according to my instructions, to receive every eight days a visit from Ernest, to make him give me an exact account of his expences, and to sanction them by my signature, before he could draw for any money ; and I was further requested, in case of the least negligence or misconduct on his part, immediately to apprise his father. Thus, was this captain of hussars expected to live at Paris like a young student in college ; my relation however, is not of the number of those *Cato's*, of whom I was just now

complaining, and I neither expected, nor wished to make him submit to so strict a regimen. Upon his first visit, we drew up a fresh convention, and modified some of the articles, in order to insure a more punctual performance of the remainder. During the first month he was tolerably faithful to his promise ; before the end of the second he had entirely forgot it. I therefore determined one night, when I was going to bed, to call upon him the next morning, for the purpose of giving him a lecture. In ruminating however, upon the subject, my ideas insensibly took another turn, and while I was recapitulating the various complaints which I had to make against him, I found in the recollection of my own youth, strong motives for granting to him the same degree of indulgence which I had often wished for myself. The consequence was, that I abandoned my plan of giving him a lecture, and I went out next morning with the intention of paying my pupil a friendly visit, in which I pro-

posed to take the opportunity of remonstrating a little with him upon his conduct, in order that I might not be thought to give up the imprescriptible right of an old man. About eight o'clock in the morning, I reached the hotel *D'Avranches*, where the young gentleman lived. I asked for *M. Ernest de Lallé*. "He is not at home." "What! is he gone out so early?" "No, Sir." "I understand you, he did not come home last night." "I beg your pardon, Sir, he did." "Why, if he came home last night, and is not gone this morning, he must be at home now." "Nevertheless, Sir, he is not at home. In my quality of porter, I know no more. But there is *Henri*, his *Valet de Chambre*; you must get an explanation from him." I then addressed myself to *Henri*: "I want to speak to your master, and he wants to see me." "I know, Sir, but—Sir——just at this moment——you see, Sir——that—*M. Ernest*."—"Why, *Henri*, you are rather awkward and indiscreet for the valet de chambre of a young

man of fashion ; go and tell your master that I will wait for him in the garden of the hotel." In about a quarter of an hour, I saw Captain Ernest arrive in his morning pantaloons, with a Spanish cap of black silk on his head. He ran to me with a smiling air, and after having made some excuses for not having visited me for so long a time, he proceeded to apologize for not receiving me in his apartment. " But . . . the weather was so fine, that he thought I should prefer chatting with him in the garden, and smoking an Havannah cygar, to being shut up in an excessively hot garret." I thanked him with as much gravity as I could, for his kind attention, and accepted the cygar. We made some turns in the garden, and all his cajoling (of which I was not altogether the dupe,) did not prevent me from reproaching him for his conduct. He assured me that his mode of life was as regular as it was irreproachable and in order to enable me to judge for myself, he proposed that I should pass a

whole day with him, and be a witness to the nature of his occupations and his pleasures;—in a word, of his daily life. “At what o’clock,” said I smiling, “shall we begin the day?” “From this very moment, if you please.” I pretended not to notice a sign which Henri made to his master at the end of one of the walks, and accompanied Ernest to his apartment. We agreed, that according to his usual practice, we should take an airing on horseback before breakfast. While he was dressing, I amused myself with looking at some books that were lying upon the sofa; he seemed to triumph in the satisfaction which was displayed in my countenance, as I opened successively volumes of Montaigne, Voltaire, Polybius; he however, seemed a little uneasy, when he saw me take up, and examine with great attention, some *petites spirales noires en fil de laiton, auxquelles restaient attaches quelques cheveux blonds*; but he soon recovered his composure, on the supposition that I was ignorant of their

use. Before we went out, he gave audience to his town tailor, and his military tailor, the celebrated *Walther*, of whom he ordered a new uniform, the price of which, was fixed for 2000 livres. In the mean time I had sent home for my riding boots, which had not been removed from their place for two years, and my old fashioned spurs. Ernest had provided for me a fine long tailed cavalry horse, with a French troop saddle and splendid caparison. He mounted in the English fashion, a long, thin, short-tailed animal, which he called a race-horse. The finest horse in his stable was destined, according to the modern custom, for the servant that attended us, who wore a square cut riding-frock and a leather belt round his waist. During our ride, which we extended as far as *Rincy*, we discussed the change which has taken place in the mode of mounting a horse; and I forced my young companion to confess that the art of riding was now reduced to the mere object of speed, and that the foreign innovations

which had been introduced, (some of which, nevertheless have their advantages) were made at the expence of grace, firmness and elegance. It was eleven o'clock when we alighted at the *Café Tortoni* to breakfast. The saloon of this coffee-house has this peculiarity about it, that almost all the persons who assemble there, are known to one another. It is a point of union, where there is so great a certainty of meeting one's acquaintance, that a young man of fashion thinks he ought not to breakfast any where else. It is a kind of *bon ton* to assume the manners of a person accustomed to the place: therefore Ernest upon entering, did not fail to say a civil word to the young girl in the bar, to pay a compliment to Madame Tortoni upon her good looks, and to call loudly for *Prévost*. *Prévost!* that Corypheus of all the waiters in the world, whose zeal, address, and inconceivable activity can only be equalled by the elegance of his manners, and the excessive politeness of his language! While I took my

cup of chocolate, and Ernest breakfasted, as people used to dine in my time, when they were very hungry, General F*** who sat at the next table, was speaking about fire-arms, and particularly about some that had been newly invented by M. Pauly. Ernest, who had just purchased a case of duelling pistols, and a fowling piece, thought proper to declaim against an invention, about which he knew nothing. I remonstrated against this French *mania* of decrying our own invention, and observed that at least it would be fair to examine before we decided. As we were not far from the *Rue de trois Freres*, in which the manufactory of M. Pauly is situated, General F*** offered to conduct us thither. After a very attentive examination, and trial of his various inventions, I left the place convinced that these fire-arms, which would perhaps make the tour of Europe before they were adopted in France, where they were invented, were as superior to those now in use, as our present ones, are to the match-locks

of the fifteenth century. Ernest's gig waited for us at the corner of the Boulevarts, and the hour was approaching when he was expected at Charrier's, to play a match at Tennis, which had been arranged the preceding evening, and in which some of the most distinguished players, particularly M. De * * * * were engaged. I placed myself behind the nets in the large gallery at the end, where I amused myself in counting the *Chasses*. Ernest dressed himself in the usual costume, in elastic pantaloons, green slippers, &c. &c. &c. In less than half an hour, he had lost between fifteen and twenty Napoleons ; but according to his own account, he played remarkably well, and his loss was only attributable to his partner. I had resolved for one day to lead the life of a young man, and therefore I let him conduct me to the Chinese baths, for his wound prevented him from going to the swimming school. We chose two adjoining apartments ; I employed the time of the bath in reading the news-papers,

and Ernest in writing two or three billets, the address of which, I did not ask him to shew me. He had ordered his servant to attend him there with his cloaths, and I saw him soon after appear in what he called a half dress; he had a light green frock coat, a waistcoat *a la cosaque*, kerseymere breeches, and stockings of the same colour. After having deliberated upon the question, of which Restorateurs we should dine at, we determined upon the Café Hardi, less on account of the reputation of the cook, than on account of the society which is to be found there from five to seven o'clock, and for the iced Champagne, which it is agreed by every one, is better there, than at any other house. After dinner we went to see the three last acts of Gabriel de Vergy, at the Theatre Français. This Shakesperian atrocity will not be laid aside, even when M^{lle}. Duchenois gives up her part. Ernest, who had left me in the orchestra to run about from box to box, soon rejoined me, and took

me to the opera ; it was just the time when the ballet was commencing, M^{lle} Gosselin was to dance that night, and my relation thought his presence as necessary in the theatre on such an occasion, as with his regiment on the day of battle. The spectators appeared to possess more sense than I expected, for they loudly applauded both Madame *Gardel* and her young rival. Upon this occasion, the public found that at the opera

“ Un Trône est assez grand pour être partagé.”

We had scarcely descended the stairs, when the carriage was announced ; but as it is considered as a kind of *bon ton*, to be seen at the conclusion of the opera, Ernest contrived to manage so well, that the guards ordered our vehicle to pass on, and we were compelled to wait half an hour longer. After having taken ices at the *Café de Foi*, where my cousin met some females whom he did, and a great many more whom he pretended to know we entered the *Salon des Etran-*

gers, which we left at the hour of supper, at one o'clock in the morning. Ernest, while conducting me home, told me that he should go directly to his own lodging, and study according to his constant practice for three or four hours before he went to bed. The only guarantee I had for the performance of his promise, was the books which I had seen upon the sofa. "I believe you!" said I, with a grave air; "I believe you!" and at the same time, returned to him the *Petite Spirale Noire*, which I had found on the same table with them, and inadvertently carried away.

No. XVI.—14th AUGUST, 1813.

THE WATERS.

“ Salve, Pæoniæ largitor nobilis undæ !
Salve, Dardanii gloria magna soli !
Publica morborum requies, commune medentura
Auxilium, præsens numeri, inempta salus.

CLAUD.

ONE of my correspondents, who has assumed the signature of Alexis, and whose writings are characterized by that gay and *piquant* species of humour, of which our

writers afford so few examples. My correspondent, Alexis, I say, in a letter upon the subject of Mineral Waters, requests me to publish such observations as have occurred to me upon that matter. In consequence of which, I am determined to continue the task (which he has rendered the more difficult, by having commenced it) even though it should involve me in a fresh quarrel with Madame C. de M., who has written to reproach me with having "endeavoured to run down her sex, and with spoiling all the portraits which I draw, some of which she admits are not destitute of point or originality, by my bitter satires against women." If there was any foundation for this charge, I must be the most unskilful of men, for I protest, in all the sincerity of my soul, that the sex never had a more sincere admirer, nor a more zealous defender than I am. But does it follow thence, that in my work, when I am endeavouring to depict the actual state of manners, I am not to allow myself to make

any observation upon females, unless it be in the shape of a panegyrick? I am very ready to admit, or even to prove, that at no period whatever, had the *fair* sex, a better title to that of *good* sex, than they have at present; but notwithstanding all this, the *fair* and *good* will still furnish to my critical notice, a very honest contingent of faults, of caprices, of follies, and of absurdities. But this *en passant*,—to return to my text.

It is now near half a century since the fashion of going to *drink the waters* at certain seasons of the year, became general among the valetudinarians of the upper classes of society. Before that time, it was only after very mature deliberation, and in the last stages of certain maladies, that a man determined to go to Bareges or to Bourbonne, the waters of which, from time immemorial have been considered as specifics in certain cases. A petty prince of the Germanic Confederation, whose Marquisate of Frauchimont will not furnish

him with the means, of every year visiting London or Paris, where his taste for play would induce him to reside, formed the plan of inducing those persons to come to him whom he could not afford to visit. Pleasure was to be the real motive of the journey, but it was necessary to devise a plausible pretext, and that of health afforded a sufficient answer to all objections. A medical man more conversant in every art, than that of physic, suggested to the Marquis the idea of drawing some advantage from the Mineral Waters, which were to be found in his little States, and to establish the reputation of the village of Spa, the future glory of which he foretold.

The Doctor wrote a pamphlet, in which he recalled to the memory of the world, the antiquity of these waters, celebrated by Pliny, under the name of *Fons Tungrorum*, and proved that they were an infallible remedy for nervous affections, and for those vapours with which the women from one end of Europe to the other had, for some time

been affected. At the same time that the pamphlet was published, a *prospectus* was circulated at London, at Vienna, and at Paris, in which it was announced, in order to alleviate the sufferings of the sick, an English Club, a French Ridotto, and a saloon for concerts and theatrical representations, besides a bank for *Trente et Un* had been established at Spa. From that moment the invalids of fashion from all the European capitals crowded to this little village in the country of Liege. It is perhaps because these are never so sensible of the value of life, as when they are in danger of losing it, that they spend so joyous a life in those receptacles of human infirmity: such at least was the case in 1772, when I first visited Spa, in company with Baron D'Erfeuil, who at that time enjoyed as much celebrity at the *Waters* as the Viscount C. had obtained in the green-rooms of the theatres. We travelled together at our joint expense, and lodged in a small house which still exists opposite the Fontaine du Pouhon.

As soon as our arrival, or rather that of my companion, was known, a printed paper was sent to us, containing a list of the persons who were then *taking the waters*. Among the number was the Marshal de***, to whom we paid our first visit. He invited us to dine with him the next day, and we found a numerous and brilliant company assembled at his house, among whom I was surprized to see a M. *Cantin*, who had been pointed out to me at Paris as the *Croupier* of a gaming table. "If I were to leave you to yourself," said my companion, "you would be in a state of constant astonishment; learn then, once for all, that no consequence whatever is attributed to any thing that is seen, said, or done in this place; every one enjoys the most perfect freedom. No one thinks it expedient to scrutinize too minutely the conduct of others, lest he should draw too much attention to his own, and it often happens, that the man is treated as a friend, or even as a lover, at Spa, by those who would not

return his salute in Paris or at Versailles. All men who visit Spa are led thither, either for health, or for amusement ; and nothing brings the various ranks of men nearer to each other than pleasure or affliction. I know more than you do of the man whose presence at the table of a Marshal of France astonished you so much. He is the son of a hosier at Rheims ; he left his family when he was very young, as Secretary to I forget what Margrave, whose service he quitted after a few years, having obtained permission to wear in his button-hole a ribbon, a privilege which, at that time, might be purchased in Germany for a few ducats. This distinction induced him at Paris to assume the title of Chevalier, and to add an *i*, to his family name ; the *Chevalier Cantini* is now the director of the Pharoah table, and you will by and by see him exercising his functions in the saloon of the Ridotto.”— If I were to yield myself up to the pleasure of recollection, which forms the delight of old men, I should give a more detailed

account of my first campaign at Spa, for every event that then occurred is indelibly impressed on my mind. I shall however content myself with copying a few lines from my Journal, which will be sufficient to give you an idea of the sort of life which was then led at Spa, and I believe things are not much changed since that time.

. July 22, 1772.

I went to bed at two o'clock, and got up at sun-rise, and proceeded immediately to knock at the window shutters of the Count, and to throw some pebbles against the windows of Madame Sophia de B. At seven o'clock we were all assembled, viz. Sophia, her mother, the Count and myself, on the *Place Pouthon*, where we took our first glass of water. The ladies then went in a cabriolet to the fountain of *Géronstère*.— We followed them upon *Escalins**.

* Small horses, so called from the sum paid for the hire of them, which was an Escalin, or about a shilling.

The Doctor had recommended Sophia to take three glasses of water from this fountain, with the interval of half an hour between each, and to continue walking as fast as she could the whole time. Her mother who was not able to keep pace with her, invested me with the office of seeing the injunctions of the physician literally obeyed. Our promenade at the Fountains continued till nine o'clock. We did not stop at the *Wattrots* nor at the *Sauvenière*, but we stopped two hours at the *Tonnalet*, where the mother of Sophia took the benefit of the pump. It was twelve o'clock when we returned into the town. The ladies then went to pay a morning visit to *Madame la Marechale*, and the Count and I passed an hour at the English Club. We dined with Lady Susan Grenville: upon that occasion the gentlemen did not *pass the bottle*, and we quitted the table at the same time with the ladies in order to go to the concert, where I rejoined Mademoiselle

de B—— The Ridotto was brilliant—Sophia danced only with me, and did not permit me to approach the *Trente et Un* table. We retired at twelve o'clock: the night was beautiful, the moon shone with all her splendour, and a walk to the mountains was suggested;—I proposed that we should go to the cabin of “Annette and Lubin.”* I gave my arm to Sophia, and we arrived a long time before the rest. A party had preceded us, for we found a bougie burning: I had brought with me by accident, the second volume of the new *Heloise*. Sophia proposed to me to read some letters—I selected well * * *

* * * * *

“Qualis nox illa, Dii, Demque!”

That day is marked in my journal with

* These personages of the tale of *Marmontel*, were born at Spa, the English built them a cottage, the ruins of which, are yet visible.

two red asterisks, a mark which I only find thirteen times in my journal, in a course of forty years. I pass over that long period to say a few words about a journey which I took two years ago to Plombieres, with no other object, but that of getting rid of my rheumatism; I took no other book with me, but the "Manual for Gouty Men," a work which has nothing at all in common with the new Heloise. Plombieres, whose tepid waters are the most anciently celebrated in France, is, if I may use the expression, buried in an abyss in the midst of the *Vosges*. • On your approach it seems as if you would be precipitated on the town, and yet you approach it easily by an avenue on the side of the Remirement, by an avenue called *the Ladies Walk*. This village consists only of one long narrow street, in a valley between two mountains, covered with wood from their base to their summit, and terminated by a walk, called *la Filerie*, which is still more pleasant than

the ladies walk : the houses, which, though built with rustic simplicity, are exceedingly neat, are all inns during the continuance of the season ; the most remarkable, are those of M. Jaconet, and the late Doctor Martinel. The former takes care to inform you, that he was formerly cook to King Stanislaus, from which we may infer that that friend of Charles XII. was by no means an epicure. I lodged in the house of the latter ; this physician, who derived his title from the waters, had never tasted water of any kind during his life. Sick persons are rather more scarce at Plombieres than at Spa, but the life led at both places is nearly the same. The company rise at an early hour and assemble altogether in the saloon of the *large bason*, where they all bathe in common. This vast bath affords a curious spectacle, in which men and women, boys and girls, cloathed in woollen shirts, are indiscriminately mixed, and all drinking, as if for a wager, water from the

Fountain of the Crucifix. On quitting the bath, the company always go with their glasses in their hands, to the ladies walk, in the centre of which, is the ferruginous fountain, from which, custom requires that you should drink three or four glasses of detestable, but eminently stomachic water.

When the different parties of bathers are once assembled together, they seldom separate, but in general order their dinners to be taken to each others lodging. Their walks after dinner are most frequently directed to *Jacquot's Wood* or *Father Vincent's farm*, which is farther among the *Vosges*. It is not merely a delightful country that they seek to enjoy in these walks, they are led partly by curiosity to see one of those uncultivated geniuses, one of those Pascal's of the village, who seem to know by instinct those arts, which others are only able to acquire by study. It is not many years ago since this man, without any model, and without any assistance, constructed from the wood, supplied by his own garden, a piano-

forte, merely from the recollection of one which he had once beheld at Nancy. I have seen the piano-forte which he made, and am enabled to say that it is a prodigy of industry. Several other mechanical works invented and executed by this old man, (who is unable to read) prove that on another theatre, and under other circumstances he would have been one of the first mechanics of the age. Father Vincent is not only a man of genius, he is a most worthy man, and is held in great veneration in his country, which he equally honours by his talents and his virtues. When the weather is very fine, the company frequently dine under the trees in the Val-D'Ajou, one of the most delightful and picturesque spots that imagination can conceive. This little journey, (which is generally made in a kind of small carts peculiar to the country, called Char-a-bancs) rarely takes place without some of them being overturned, but if any accident happens to the travellers, they can have recourse to the assistance of a peasant of the

Val-d'Ajou who can operate in the case of a broken or dislocated limb as well as the first surgeon in Paris. It is curious to observe this aptitude, this surgical instinct with which all the inhabitants of this valley, from the child to the old man is gifted. At Plombieres as at Spa, at Bath as at Toeplitz, the evening is finished at the card-table, where a man is much more sure of impairing his fortune at night, than improving his health in the morning, by exhausting the fountains,

Before I finish this discourse with the portraits of some of the regular frequenters of watering places, of whom I have found some sketches in my *album*, I must notice three letters which have been written to me upon this subject.

The first is from a fellow-labourer who takes the title of *Hermit de la Chaussée du Maine*. He reproaches me with having forgotten, in translating the four verses of Claudian, which I have taken for a motto, to render *inempta Salus*, (to which words he

seems to attach considerable importance) and he maliciously asks me, "if I have not been forbidden by the faculty?" The second is from an amiable, but scolding correspondent, who affords me an opportunity of atoning for some wrongs which I committed towards her at the beginning of this discourse. Perhaps even now she will not be as fully satisfied with me as I desire.

The third letter is too generally interesting not to be given at full length. It is as follows:

"PAIMBŒUF, *Aug.* 18, 1813.

"Things as well as men, Mr. Hermit, are subject to the vicissitudes of good and bad fortune. Praises are lavished upon such and such waters, which are good for nothing, while of those, which really perform miracles nothing is said. It is in the name of humanity that I entreat, that I call upon you, to communicate to your countrymen the knowledge of the invaluable springs which flow almost unheard of in the heart of Brittany. Although it is not *exactly* known

where the *fountain of youth* is situated, (notwithstanding what has been stated by *Huon de Bourdeaux*, who says that the aforesaid fountain takes its rise in the terrestrial paradise, and by the Spaniard, *Ponce de Leon*, who thought he found it in the Floridas) I see no reason why that celebrated name should not be given to the mineral springs of Dinan, the waters of which, among other singular qualities, have the property of *repairing the irreparable* ravages of time. I could prove this extraordinary fact by the evidence of several women who have recovered their youth, provided I could induce them to acknowledge even a past old age. An immense number of experiments of which I have preserved memorandums, prove as clearly as a thing of that kind can be proven, that barrenness (unless indeed, it has been sanctioned a long time by age) is invariably removed by these ferruginous waters. But that which is really miraculous, and must be invaluable to women in their different

conditions, is, that these waters afford to some, the hopes of becoming mothers, and make others forget that they have been so. As you value therefore the health, the glory, the happiness of the fair sex, do, my dear Herr it, use your efforts to bring into fashion next season, the Mineral Waters of Dinan, a small town in Brittany, where I assure you, you are held in great veneration.

I have, &c.

Signed P * * * * ,

AN OLD PHYSICIAN.

I publish this letter at present, but shall defer giving my opinion upon the assertions which it contains till next season.

Let us return to our portraits. There are some plants which only thrive in moist soils, and there are some persons who are only to be seen at watering-places; there they seem to be in their element. The types of this species of amphibious animals, are unquestionably a Monsieur and Madame

Despares, whom no one can boast of having seen in any other part of Europe, except Spa, Bath, Tœplitz, Tunbridge, or Plombières. They disappear like swallows about the end of autumn, and no one can tell in what country they pass the winter. The first time I saw this couple of birds of passage, the husband was approaching his fiftieth year, and the lady was not above twenty-eight. They were both distinguished for correct and elegant manners and possessed the tone and language of the best company. Despares played enormously high, and the part assigned to his wife was to declaim against this fatal passion, and to endeavour to excite others of a more tender nature. She had a most extraordinary predilection for the Princes of the Germanic Confederation, from the Electors to the Abbé of Stablo inclusively, and it was difficult to be admitted to her society, if you were not qualified to sit in the diet of Ratisbon.

I remember a Canoness of Clai * * *, whom you were much more sure of finding at Spa than with her Chapter.

Par trente-six printemps sur sa tête amassés,
Ses modestes appas n'étaient point effacés.

Having determined to forego the sweets of marriage, she had made her arrangements for enjoying the pleasures of celibacy. She regularly visited Spa every year, accompanied by the same lady, and a *new cousin*, who, to prevent all mistakes, and also the necessity of explanation, was called *the cousin of the waters*. D'Erfeuil, who enjoyed the honour of that relationship during the season that we passed together at Spa, wished to enrol me a member of the family for the ensuing season. This amiable lady died about ten years after, at that very place, where she had at least contrived to increase the number of ——— agreeable recollections.

Every one at these watering-places knew the Baron de Ferlus, who called himself a Banker at Hamburgh, though

his signature would not produce a stiver in that city. No one appeared to be more profoundly versed in great commercial speculations. He had correspondents (at least he said so) in every great town in Europe, the names of the most celebrated merchants were always in his mouth, and it was without affectation that he spoke of his immense operations at the last fairs of Frankfort and of Leipsic. The only thing that puzzled his auditors was, to account for the want of judgment of the sovereigns of Europe, in not confiding to him the care of their finances, which made it necessary for him to go every year to a watering place in search of dupes. It is three or four years ago since he met a German nobleman at the waters of *Baden*, in Switzerland, and contrived to persuade him that he had upon one of his estates in Lusatia, immense marble quarries, which, if properly worked, would produce several millions. They entered into a contract upon the subject, and the Baron three or four months afterwards

disposed of his share of the speculation for 80,000 livres to a merchant at Neufchatel, who has since laid out between three and four hundred thousand livres in hunting for these quarries, without having been able to find as much marble as would be sufficient for the construction of a chimney-piece. This man has made and destroyed about twenty fortunes. He one day acknowledged to me that he had not ten louis in his pocket, and at the same time offered to lay me a wager of 1000, that he would return from Bath, where he was going to pass the season, with 100,000 livres in his pocket. I did not accept of a wager which I should have been sure of losing.

For thirty years past *Villebrune* has had no other means of subsistence, than those which he derives from his skill at play, which he only exercises at the most celebrated watering places. His good fortune is so uniform, that one might be inclined to attribute it in some degree to his very *superior address*, if he had not several times

established the fairness of his play with the point of his sword. Villebrune has so often, and so successfully had recourse to this kind of proof, that he has now *convinced* every body without *satisfying* any body.

Watering places have at all times had their poets as well as their physicians. That innocent body, (I speak of the Poets) possess in common, a stock of almost twenty ideas, which make their appearance every year clothed in new rhimes. We always hear of "Flames burning in the midst of the waters," of finding death where we came to seek a cure, and a hundred other prettinesses of the same kind. The coryphæus of those warm-water poets, was formerly the little Abbé de Roquette, who was in such request, that many people took pains to ascertain which spot the Abbé meant to honour with his presence, before they told their physicians what watering place to recommend to them. This *Priestling* who was pale and thin, was very like the Abbé *Voisenon*, whom he endeavoured

to imitate by drinking the waters with a nosegay of pimpernal. The Abbé de Roquette, was at watering places the director of every *fête* and the soul of every pleasure. I shall remember as long as I live, the little theatre which he constructed in two hours at Pyrmont, whither he had invited a company of French players. He had obtained permission from a coach-maker and saddler to make use of his premises, provided he did no injury to the coaches, saddles, &c. He began with taking the bodies of several coaches from their carriages, and arranged them in a semicircle, these were his front boxes, behind them he placed another semicircle of coaches, the bodies of which, being upon the carriages, commanded a view over those in front; a large open coach of the Bishop of Paderborn formed the state box: the saddles put upon the beams of the building constituted the gallery where the company all sat astride. A more grotesque spectacle, or one which

excited more laughter it is impossible to imagine.

I have lately had occasion to know that the watering place poets of the present day are neither less numerous, nor less courted than they were in the time of the Abbé de Roquette. One of them however, last year acquired a character for malignity, which might have been prejudicial to his brethren, by a poem entitled "The Waters of B * * *." He pretended that these waters possessed the same virtues as the fountain of *Salmacis*, and cited a great number of *Hermaphroditical* unions which they had effected.

The Father of the Waters, the Baron F. died last year at Bareges at the age of ninety-five. This fatiguing mortal who was as much avoided as the Abbé Roquette was sought after, had discovered the art of making the details of the campaigns of Marshal Saxe (under whom he had formerly served) insipid. According to his ac-

count of the battles of *Lawfeldt* and *Roeux* were gained by his advice. Having attained the rank of brigadier, he quitted the service after the defeat of *Minden*, and as an apology for his conduct, he thought it necessary every year to take the waters, where he told every one, (who would listen to him) for the twentieth time, that " Marshal Contades had been defeated, from not having adopted his plan of the campaign: That the Duke of Fitz-James had also lost a battle, from not having made an attack on the point which he had suggested; and that if it had not been for his efforts, the retreat would have been impossible." All the wars in which France has been engaged for the last half century, all the battles, all the memorable achievements, all the splendid victories, which within that period have embellished our history, are to him as if they had never happened. He stuck most pertinaciously to the *seven years war*, and seemed to think that a cannon had not been fired in Europe since that time.

The appendage to this eternal Baron was a M. D'A ****, who, in consequence of a journey which he made in 1776 to Berlin, had become a ridiculous and extravagant admirer of Frederick the Great. The only advantages which he derived from that journey, were a long Prussian queue, a cane in the form of a crutch, and the rage for taking snuff every moment from his waistcoat pocket. I might in this gallery insert the portraits of a fine lady afflicted with the vapours, whose nervous indispositions become her so well, and which are always so admirably adapted to the age and sex of the witnesses: Of another who came under the care of her mother for the recovery of her health, which would have been equally as well restored any where else, *with a few months patience*.—Of that artful coquette, one of whose chief motives in forming new acquaintances, was the hope of never seeing them again;—but there are some secrets which must not be told, and some truths which it is necessary to suf-

fer to grow old, before they are made public.

People who are always anxious for the conclusion, will ask me what I think of a practice which has grown so general in Europe. I answer, that like many others it has its advantages and its disadvantages, its motives and its pretexts, that it promotes health by promoting pleasure and variety, and that if it is more amusing to point out its abuses, it is easy to enumerate its good effects.

I intend some day to visit all the baths of the capital, and I shall take an opportunity of giving an account of those of Tivoli, an establishment which has not its equal in Europe.

END OF VOL. II.

